That Reminds Me!

BY "CASUAL"

Rs. 2.

That Reminds Me.

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RIDING A HOBBY HORSE.

RIDING A HOBBY-HORSE.

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION TO A NEW HOBBY.

It seems to be a general characteristic of youth that it must collect something and in many of us the desire to collect something or other remains a passion throughout life. When we are young we collect stamps, birds' eggs, moths, butterflies, coins or fossils and when we grow to a more responsible age we collect books, china, furniture or pictures. Admittedly all such hobbies have their good points and serve their purpose, but they have their disadvantages as well. Of the youthful examples, stamp collecting is an excellent thing if one has relations in every country in the world susceptible to appeals, otherwise the hobby becomes boring, not to mention expensive. To collect by exchanging has its lures, but there is always a lurking fear that Smith Minor rather swindled you when he gave you what he called a very rare Venezuelan in exchange for a Persian which is catalogued as being worth ten shillings when in good condition and after all yours only had one corner missing. Take birds' eggs, moths and butterflies : they are all messy and have a habit of getting lost or trodden upon, while you can never get very far with coins and fossils because the former are too expensive and the latter hard to collect. Take the hobbies of the older young people : books, china, furniture or pictures, and think how expensive they are and how slowly the collection grows which is rather a nuisance when half the joy of collecting is to have a larger and better collection than anyone else.

As a more or less normal boy, I collected all the encumbrances to which I have referred and doubtless would have gone on to collect elderly bric-à-brac had it not been that purely by accident I came upon one of the best hobbies of all, a hobby that is so inexpensive that it costs nothing at all, and I marvel that more people do not take it up. It was brought to my notice shortly after I had left school by one of the queerest friends I have ever had, a wandering artist with a wonderful facility for changing his address, not because he could not pay his rent, as I was at first inclined to think, but because it pleased him so to do. I never knew him to sell a picture for the very good reason that he apparently never tried, preferring to keep them for his own pleasure. He did not, however, mind selling sketches or caricatures when caprice pleased him to do them. His most valued possessions appeared to be, and as I found out subsequently actually were, his books full of stories gathered during his wanderings all over the world. Some were snipped from papers, some were typed and some written up in a neat, tiny handwriting. What has happened to him I know not. The last time I saw him was six years ago when he had just returned from the Continent after completing a little spying on our behalf. To return to this hobby, at first I thought that it was unique and, though I have since been compelled to change that opinion, I believe that very few people have ever followed in his footsteps. I did myself and have been well repaid for the little trouble it has caused me.

You may collect stories of every kind without worrying about classification, and that is the way I commenced myself, or you may specialise, as in the case of philatelists. If you are of an erudite turn of mind you may split your collection into wit, fun and humour which all differ one from the other in certain marked characteristics. You may collect personal anecdotes, sporting yarns, tales of children, of the church or the stage. I know of one university divine who has spent years making a wonderful collection of stories about Oxford and Cambridge, which would probably vie with anything collected by those notable raconteurs Mr. Pett Ridge, Miss Helen Marr and Mr. George Robey. For my own part I started with a penchant for anecdotes and stories about sports of all kinds and I have developed my collection along such lines. I have a distinct remembrance that one of the first I ever got was a cricket story illustrating the manner in which Englishmen will play cricket wherever they happen to be in the world. This was the case of a ship's crew which landed for a few hours in an inhospitable region bordering on the Mediterranean and decided to play cricket. The man who was fielding in the long-field was told to go further out and after a time it was noticed that he was missing and it transpired subsequently that he had been carried off by bandits.

Environment too will alter the trend of one's collection. The war provided many of us with a rich opportunity, and some were able to take advantage. If I did not make the fullest use of the opportunity myself it is to be accounted for by a preponderance of more important duties. Further I had the misfortune to lose two of my best books of cuttings and have never been able to replace or recover them. Actually humorous stories during the war were forced upon everyone; and it would take a very Early Victorian of gloomy outlook not to see the humour of War Office thoroughness which insisted upon sending sand as ballast all the way from England to Mesopotamia. The activities of the Higher Command were indeed a never-failing source of merriment. For example, one remembers the story of two officers who applied for leave, the first to get married and the second to act as his best man. Leave was granted to the latter, but was refused to the former because his reason was insufficient. You will of course say that such a thing could not be true, but it was typical, and you will find men who will swear to the truth of even stranger things. A good parallel is that of the officer with the remnants of his company who was holding on like grim death to a trench which was gradually being blown to blazes and his company with it. When the attack was at its fiercest, a runner from headquarters carrying a message, literally hurled himself into the remnants of the trench. "Thank the Lord", gasped the officer as he tore open the message, "I suppose this means reinforcements at last", but what he actually read in the message was: "Please expedite the nominal roll of Unitarians in your company. Nil returns required".

The country that you live in will also tend to affect your collection, and if, for example, your lot is cast in India, you will inevitably acquire a great store of Indian yarns. For myself I have rather neglected them as so many books on the subject have already appeared and for that reason I have excluded them carefully, with one or two exceptions, from this volume because I felt that everyone would know them and hundreds better, while my ambition has been to give at least a good proportion of stories which the reader may not know. Strangely perhaps, one of the best Indian yarns in my possession is the same, except for changes in vernacular, as an Irish yarn I collected many years ago. It concerns a severe outbreak of cholera in a certain station, and deaths were so many that bodies were picked up in the streets by coolies and conveyed to a dead-house to await interment. Among such bodies picked up was one of an English tommy who was duly deposited in the dead-house. As it happened, he was not dead but very drunk, and when he woke in the morning he commenced to batter on the door and curse with great volubility. The coolies were very alarmed but after a time one braver than the rest crept up to the door and shouted: "Tairo, sahib, tairo, bokus tyar nai hai". "Wait, sir, wait, the coffin's not ready yet".

Those who collect clerical stories have a very wide field of both true and imaginary happenings and for humour there is not much to choose between them. One of the best of the imaginary stories is that of the clergyman who tried to reform a confirmed whisky drinker and at last induced him to promise not to touch whisky for a month. A month later they met and the clergyman asked the erring one if he had kept his promise and received an affirmative answer. Deeply gratified, he asked if it had been much of a trial and received the disconcerting answer: "No; it hasn't really because I've got to like gin nearly as well".

Among true stories is the one of a certain meek and tiny bishop with a portly and important wife who used to rule him with a rod of iron and a strident voice. They were on tour and in camp, and from the splashing sounds it was evident that madame was taking a bath. Suddenly a passer-by heard her voice ring out: "George, George," and after a time a meek little voice answered: "Yes". Then came the reply: "Come and dry me at once".

Personal anecdotes also provide a rich storehouse and to them may be added long lists of witty sayings which are a never-ending joy to a connoisseur of wit. What could be more delightful than Israel Zangwill's saying about George Bernard Shaw: "The way he believes in himself is very refreshing in these atheistic days when so many men believe in no God at all".

What too can compare with the story of the visit of a certain royalty to India and his amazement when at one place of reception he was provided with a most beautiful marble bath with hot and cold taps which actually produced hot and cold water. Little did he realise that on top of the bath room was stationed a man with ample supplies of hot and cold water who watched through a peep-hole to see which tap was turned on and then poured down the appropriate water.

True stories may be collected on the basis that they are funnier than fiction and true funny stories are more numerous than might be imagined. There is the delightful story of the library in America which had lost so many books either by mischance or design that some steps had become necessary to recover them. Various measures were undertaken but proved of no avail and at last it was decided to try the effect of advertising that for one week such books might be returned and no question would be asked. To assist those who might be nervous of walking up to the counter and handing the books back, baskets were placed in various spots so that books might be dropped in unobserved. One assistant had an idea that it might have a good psychical effect if a few books were placed in a basket on the nest-egg principle, and he determined to try this plan. When he returned a few minutes later and looked in the basket he found that one of the books had gone. The temptation had been too great.

Apart from my predilection for sporting yarns, stories which are purely ludicrous have always had a great attraction for me. There is something essentially mirth-compelling about the meeting of the Welsh municipal committee to decide how they should make their new ornamental lake look more attractive. Many suggestions were made, and at last someone moved that several gondolas should be purchased. One old Welsh farmer with a frugal mind and but a hazy idea as to what a gondola was, got up and proposed an amendment that only two gondolas should be purchased, a male and a female, and that they should be allowed to breed.

This volume has not been published with the idea of obtaining disciples for my hobby, but those who care to take it up will find it the most inexpensive hobby in the world, the only assets necessary being a sense of humour and a scrap-book. If you cannot trust your memory, jot down a story when you hear or read it and write or type it afterwards, and of course to these you can add such cuttings as you are able to make. When first I drafted out this book, I intended that it should be of sporting yarns purely and simply, but I realised that the reader might easily become surfeited with several hundred sports yarns, so, while leaving a large proportion of such, I have added sections under other headings already suggested in this preface. I have seen books advertised and have read one or two which proffer hints how to tell a good story. That I cannot pretend to do for my belief is that the telling of a story depends so much on individuality, Probably the facility might be acquired by practice, but this book is not intended as a text-book. I know one important member of the I.C.S. who is noted for his entertaining facilities and in a most skilful, yet effortless, manner he will elicit great amusement out of a yarn containing the minimum of pith. On the other hand I have a good friend who will murder the best story under the sun. Either he will disclose the point before beginning the story or he will forget the point altogether.

As regards the selection presented here for your consumption, I do not pretend that a large proportion are new, though I do claim that honour for some. Some of them will be found to be rehashed, but that is inevitable when one considers that the best authorities hold that there are only five basic stories from which all others have been formed by a series of permutations and combinations. I have, however, related them in these pages as nearly as possible in the manner that I relate them in the course of conversation or in articles for publication. The manner of telling may not be ideal, and doubtless many of my readers will be able to improve it. The stories, however, will at least serve to remind readers of the better stories that everyone always claims to know. Hence the title.

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY.

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY.

Two Cambridge undergraduates were returning to Cambridge by car after rather a hectic night in London. For some time everything went well, but suddenly the front mud-guard bumped up against a tree and the drive very nearly came to a fatal end. "You'd better be careful, old thing," said the passenger, to which the driver replied, "Sorry, old man, I thought you were driving."

Herewith a Cambridge story for the truth of which I can vouch. The scene is the private laboratory of a certain professor of physics. A lady demonstrator entered, and immediately there was a magnetic storm among the instruments. The professor who was very deeply engrossed in his experiments shouted, "Go away." The lady demonstrator, however, approached still nearer and the delicate instruments commenced to jazz furiously while the lady demonstrator said timidly, "Please, sir". At this point the professor gnashed his teeth and snapped out, "GO AWAY!!! And never enter this room again with steel corsets on!"

Another true story is one in which it was a very rare privilege to see a very learned professor altogether nonplussed for an answer. The subject was sylviculture and the lecture was upon seedling trees. It was a lecture that the professor had given many many times before and once again he came to his stock phrase, "To safeguard the nursery against the inroads of mice, a deep trench must be dug around it." At this point an undergraduate interposed, "How would you get in yourself, sir?" The lecturer thought for a moment and replied, "Of course there would be a bridge." Without a moment's hesitation came the poser, "And wouldn't the mice come in over the bridge as well, sir?"

The following incident actually happened to one of my friends in St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge. He was going along slowly on a motor-bicycle on a rather greasy day and skidding violently just outside Christ's College, he collided violently with an undergraduate of foreign nationality and both were deposited in the gutter. My friend helped the foreigner to rise and, apologising, said, "I'm awfully sorry; I hope you're not hurt." With a look of intense anger on his face, the irate undergraduate replied, "Eef I am hurt, sah, then I moost keel you to-night." My friend relating the story subsequently mentioned that he departed hurriedly.

There are many ways of describing the early morning feeling of the man who has dined and wined over well on the previous evening, but the following example has a certain pathos of its own and has the merit of being true. There had been a bump supper at a certain Oxford college and the next morning, on the way to a lecture, the one who had supped wisely met the one who had not and remarked, "You're looking very shaky this morning." "Yes," replied the other feelingly, "I feel as if I'd one foot in the grave and the other on a banana skin."

Our Universities are said to live in the past, but one would at least expect that a leading novelist like William Caine would at least be known by name and that his works would have acquired some reputation. From this true story it would seem otherwise. An undergraduate walked into a well-known bookseller's in Cambridge and asked, "Have you a copy of 'Great Snakes' by William Caine?" After a lengthy search, the assistant returned and said, "I'm sorry that we haven't a copy, sir, but we have Borradaile's 'Manual of Zoology'."

True children's stories could be quoted almost without end, and it may not be out of place to give two connected with the first glimmerings and conceptions of religion. The first deals with a dear child whose books showed a very orthodox Heaven which impelled him to ask. "Does everyone wear white robes in Heaven?" "Yes, dear, certainly," was the reply which elicited the disconcerting comment, "What an awful lot of washing there must be."

The second deals with a baby girl who had been pondering upon the names of the stars and, pointing to one in particular, she asked, "What is ve name of dat one, mummy?" "Venus, darling." After a period of thought she ventured again, "Did God call it Venus?" "No, darling, we did." Then followed a further contemplation the upshot of which was, "Mummy, I'se goin' to name a star an' an'... (then a triumphant outburst) I'se call it Bobby."

It was during the sermon in church one morning that a little girl whispered to her mother, "Please, mummy, I think I'm going to be sick." Not wishing to attract the notice of the attentively listening congregation, the mother said, "Well, dear, steal out quietly, and try not to be sick until you are quite clear of the church. Then go home, or if you feel quite better you can come back here." Obediently the child departed. After about ten minutes she returned and resumed her seat next to mother. "Do you feel all right now, dear?" "Yes, thank you, mummy." "And were you sick?" "Yes." "I hope you waited till you were out of the church." "Well, mummy, I found I couldn't quite wait; and fortunately I saw at the door a little box marked 'For the Sick.' "

A school inspector was going round a certain school inspecting each class in turn. His method was to set questions to one class and then go on to the next while they were being answered, returning later to see what progress had been made. To one class he said, "Now I want to see how clever you are. On the blackboard I write 'Don't play with matches. Remember the Fire of London.' Now, while I go on to the next class, I want you to see how many wise sentences like that you can make up for yourselves." Off he went to the next class, returning in about ten minutes. Rubbing his hands, he said, "Now who has made up any sentences like the one I wrote on the board?" There was a blank silence and the inspector became a little peevish and said that surely someone had been able to show a little intelligence, whereupon one little boy put up his hand and said that he had made one up. The inspector was pleased and said, "Well done, my little man, and what is your sentence?" In reply a childish voice piped out, "Don't spit. Remember the Flood."

A certain Oxford undergraduate was notorious for his habit of not paying bills and one day, when in London, he called in at his tailor's with a friend and ordered a new suit. When the order was completed, he asked how much the suit would be, whereupon the tailor replied that it would be fourteen guineas. On hearing this sum, the undergraduate began to protest and eventually, after much argument, the tailor reduced the price to twelve guineas. When they were outside the shop, his friend asked, "Why on earth did you argue so much over the price of that suit when you know that you haven't the slightest intention of paying the bill?" The undergraduate replied, "Oh, I don't know. The poor devil won't think that he has lost so much."

The night of the 'Varsity Rugby match in London is invariably a wild one, and the following story is by no means improbable. A thirsty undergraduate rushed into a large London bar and, beckoning a waiter, said, "Waiter! Bring me a double brandy and soda before the row starts." The waiter hurried off and returned with the drink which was hurriedly despatched and a second time came the request, "Quickly, waiter, bring me another before the row starts." The dutiful waiter hurried off again and returned with a second double brandy and soda which was despatched in its turn. As the undergraduate was returning the glass, the waiter said deferentially, "Excuse me asking, sir, but to what row do you refer?" With a resigned look, the undergraduate replied, "Why the row that's going to start now. I've got no money."

A story is told of a Cambridge undergraduate who was going up to London but found the train unexpectedly crowded. He wandered about disconsolately, but every carriage had its full quota and the journey looked like being most uncomfortable. Suddenly a bright idea came to him as he reached the last carriage. Assuming an air of authority, he pulled open all the doors and shouted out, "All change, please. This carriage is not going." All the occupants hustled out and packed themselves into other carriages while he entered and sat down, congratulating himself upon his brain-wave and upon having secured an empty carriage. The guard waved his flag, the engine whistled and the undergraduate said to himself, "Now we're off," but still his carriage didn't move. He was about to investigate this phenomenon when the station-master poked his head into the window with a grin and said, "Are you the bright young gentleman who said that this carriage was not going?" With a satified smile the undergraduate admitted the impeachment whereupon the station-master replied, "Well, you're quite right. It's not going. The porter thought you were a director and uncoupled it. Your train's about a mile away now."

At Oxford and Cambridge long credit is the rule rather than the exception, more so before the war than at present, bills being allowed to run for two or three years. This of course entails great trustfulness on the part of the tradesmen, but they are rarely at fault and the bill is paid sooner or later. In this connection a story is told of a Cambridge tailor who, when asked by an undergraduate, "How is it you have never asked me for payment of my account?" replied, "Oh, I never ask a gentleman for money." "Indeed! Then how do you get on if he doesn't pay?" "Well," responded the tailor thoughtfully, "after a certain time I conclude that he is not a gentleman, and then I ask him."

In a certain part of America there was a very bad earthquake and the fond parents of a rather precocious young boy was sent to stay with an uncle in a distant State for fear that he should come to harm if another occurred. Young James arrived safely at his temporary home, but three days later the fond parents received the following wire: "Am returning boy. Send earthquake instead."

Children are very often more acute than adults will give them credit for being. The fact that a supposedly adored big brother was returning home from school had been carefully concealed from his ten-year-old brother until the latter returned from his local day school. He was sent upstairs to wash his face while the elder was concealed in the pantry. When he came downstairs again his mother said, "Tommy, I've got a big surprise for you." Unconcernedly Tommy replied, "I know what it is. Teddy's back from school." In surprise, his mother asked, "Why, how did you know that?" only to receive the illuminating reply, " 'Cos my money-box is empty."

Wit in examinations will frequently gain marks, depending upon the mood of the examiner, but it is doubtful if the following example would be of much avail. The question on the paper was : "Do you believe in a more elastic currency? Give reasons." The student was perplexed for an answer and could think of no reasons, but eventually he wrote down, "The currency is elastic enough, but it might with advantage be made more adhesive."

A little boy who had not been long at school came crying to his father one day, "Daddy, I can't get this 'rithmetic right. Teacher said something about finding the greatest common divisor." Father looked up from his paper and replied with evident disgust, "Great Scott! Haven't they found that thing yet. Why, they were hunting for it when I was a boy."

There are few things that mischievous children are not capable of, and animals are often the victims and often retaliate. Little Johnny, howling bitterly, rushed one day to his father and sobbed out, "Daddy, that donkey kicked me." Father, however, had had previous experiences and he asked, "Have you been annoying it?" Johnny, without a sign of repentance, replied, "N'no. I was only t'trying to c'carve my name on it."

A certain wild youth, after an unpromising career at school and university, finally made up his mind to run away to Canada where he was equally unsuccessful. After a time he decided to return to the parental roof where he met with anything but an exhilarating reception. When walking down the street a little later, he was greeted by an old acquaintance, "Hullo, Jack, I didn't know you were back in England. Were your people glad to see you?" The wanderer replied wearily, "No; I can't exactly say that they were glad to see me." The friend asked with a grin, "Then your father didn't kill the fatted calf?" "No;" he replied feelingly, "but he damned nearly killed the prodigal son."

Double entendres might be quoted almost without end. A good, but harmless, one emanates from a Canadian university. She was talking of matters photographic, and he was listening in distraught fashion. "Did you know," she asked, "that Maud has a proper dark-room?" "Yes;" he replied absent-mindedly, "I developed a negative there myself last night."

From the same source comes that of an irascible student who walked into an outfitter's shop and asked the assistant for a pair of socks. "What number?" queried the assistant politely, which drew the reply, "Two of course. Do I look like a centipede?"

A medical student at Cambridge University was taking the *viva voce* portion of the first M.B. examination, but, though the examiner plied him with question after question, he was unable to give a single correct answer. At last, with a shrug of despair, the examiner took up the sheet of questions in front of him and tore off a small portion from one corner. Handing the scrap to the student, he said, "I think you had better write down everything you know on that scrap of paper." The student was a man of ready wit and without a moment's hesitation he tore the small piece in half and, handing one half to the examiner he replied, "I think you will find that large enough for both of us."

This brings to mind an equally clever answer by a young middy who was being examined by an admiral. The latter asked him the question, "Who are the greatest three admirals in English history?" The middy was stumped for a moment as he could only think of two, but with ready wit he answered, "Nelson, Collingwood and......I didn't quite catch your name, sir." He got through.

During a chemistry lecture at Harvard, the professor turned to one undergraduate and said, "Mr. Brown, please give me the name of three products containing starch." Mr. Brown was not an expert at chemistry but he was gifted with quick thought and after a moment's hesitation he replied, "A collar and two cuffs."

This brings to mind an obviously untrue story from Oxford of a physiology demonstrator who was interrogating an undergraduate who was more noted for his prowess at sports than at learning. Said the professor despairingly, "Don't you know anything about cells?" only to get the bright reply, "Not much, sir. I've only been in two."

Two Oxford undergraduates were ruminating how their evening should be spent. The first one suggested spinning a coin to decide and the second one decided the conditions; "Heads we go to the pictures, tails to the theatre, and if the coin stands on end we'll work."

An Oxford don who daily took equestrian exercise created much amused comment by the fact that he invariably wore one spur and one only. Repeatedly he was asked the reason for this but never would he vouchsafe it. At the end of a lecture one day when he asked if anyone had questions to ask, a daring undergraduate responded "Why do you only wear one spur, sir?" and the reason was at last forthcoming. Sternly the don replied, "I wear only one spur, Mr.—, because a minimum of logical reasoning proves to me that if I spur one side of a horse, the other side invariably follows."

A Cambridge professor had the habit of making small marginal notes on the written work of those who attended his classes, for their future guidance. On one occasion, such a note was quite indecipherable so the undergraduate concerned took back to him the paper and ask the nature of the comment. The professor looked at his note and then at the text and finally had to admit that at the moment he was unable to say but requested that the paper might be left for his consideration. For some time he examined the comment that he had written in the margin but could not make head or tail of it. Suddenly light dawned upon him. He had written "Write more legibly."

A teacher in a primary school had enlarged upon the joys of the hereafter and at the end of her talk she asked all children who would like to go to Heaven to put up their hands. All hands went up except one and in pained surprise the teacher turned to little Jacob.

"Wouldn't you like to go to Heaven, Jacob?"

"Oh, yes, teacher. I'd like fine to go to Heaven."

"Then why did'nt you put up your hand."

"Please, miss, father says business is going to the devil and I must stick to the business."

The school inspector was making his annual visit to a certain village school and in the customary fashion was asked to dine with the squire. The old one had died and his place had been bought up by a typical profiteer who had accumulated funds from glue or jam or some similar thing. After dinner the inspector was telling how he had asked one little boy several times. "Who wrote Hamlet?" At last the boy burst into tears and sobbed out, "P-please, sir, I didn't." The story went down very well and there was a general laugh. No one laughed louder than the squire and he continued to laugh for some minutes and the guests waited in mild amusement for him to stop. At last he was able to talk again and he said with a loud chuckle, "And I wager the little devil had done it all the time."

One of the best stories of children I remember to have heard is that of a party at which the game was being played where each person represents some railway station. The hostess asked child to choose a station and there was a general clamour of "Glasgow," "London," "York," and so on. One child, however, sat silent so the hostess said kindly, "Well, Tommy, and what are you going to be?" There was a moment's silence and the child replied, "I think I'm going to be sick."

The great distance from the railway-station to the river at both Oxford and Cambridge recalls the story of the dear old lady who was visiting the latter University during May Week. She was delighted with everything she had seen and she remarked so to the ticket inspector at the station while she was waiting for her train. "But what a pity," she added, "that the station isn't near the river." "Yes, there is that, mum, but I suppose they thought it would be more convenient to have it near the railway."

There is a very human touch about the story of the little boy who was making for home as fast as his legs would carry him and collided with the vicar who asked him why he was running so hard. "Home", panted the boy. "Ma's going to spank me." The astonished minister gasped and enquired, "Are you so eager to be spanked that you run all the way home?" "No," shouted the breathless boy over his shoulder as he resumed flight, "but if I don't get there before pa, he'll do it instead."

A kindergarten mistress was showing her class a picture of the early Christian days, depicting martyrs thrown to the lions by the Romans. One sensitive wee child was soon moved to bitter tears so the mistress turned to her and said in kindly fashion: "What are you crying for. Are you very sorry for the poor Christians?" "No-o-o-oh!" she sobbed pointing to the picture, "but that poor lion hasn't got a Christian."

Bills in numbers are always one of the banes of a University education even though long credit is allowed. A story is told of a fond but impecunious father who discovered that his son's tailor's bill had not been paid for three years so he called in to see the tailor and said: "My son tells me that you have allowed him to run a bill for three years. I have come therefore......" "Not at all, sir, there is really no hurry", interrupted the tailor deprecatingly but rubbing his hands with pleasurable anticipation at the thought of receiving his cheque. His hopes were sadly shattered when the visitor replied, "So I have gathered and therefore I have come to tell you that in future I shall also buy my clothes from you."

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.

A firm of engineers once received the following letter from a French-Canadian correspondent :—

Mister, dear fren, i got the valve which i buy from you alrite but why for godsake you doan sent me no handle. Whats the use a valve when she doan have no handle. I loose to my customer sure thing. You doan treat me rite is my money not so good to you as the other fellow. My customer he holler like hell for valve, you know he is a hot summer and the wind he no blow the mill. You doan send handle pretty quick I goan order same valve from...companies. Goodby your fren, etc., etc.

P.S. since I rite these I fine the goddam handle in the box excuse me.

A Scot, one day, with a collie at his heels was standing in the fish market admiring a fine display of shell fish. Unfortunately for the dog, its tail rested for a moment in a basket full of live lobsters one of which obtained a firm grip of the collie's tail. The surprised collie dashed off yelping while the lobster hung on grimly. At the sight of his disappearing lobster the fishmonger was speechless with indignation but finally he managed to ejaculate, stuttering badly with rage: "Mon,

mon! whustle to yer dog! Whustle to yer dog." "Hoots awa', mon," replied the Scot complacently, "whustle to yer lobster."

An Irishman was handling dynamite in a quarry but owing to carelessness the whole box went up taking Mike with it. The foreman came round later and said to another Irishman. "Where's Mike?" Pat replied, "He's gone." So the foreman asked when he would be back. "Well," replied Pat. "If he comes back as fast as he went, he'll be back yesterday."

This reminds one of the story of the Irishman who came home very late from work. He had a bandage over his left eye, bruises all over his face, and a generally dishevelled appearance, and as he sank exhaustedly into a chair, his wife gazed at him in alarm. "Why, what in Hivin's name is the matther wid ye, Barney," she exclaimed. "I'm jist after havin' an argument wid that feller Schmitz," he explained in a subdued voice. "Wid Schmitz," she shouted, excitedly. "Do ye mane to sit there and tell me that ye allowed a dirty foreigner like Schmitz—a cross-eyed narrow-chested, bandy-legged—" "Whist, whist," whispered her husband, "sure, ye mustn't talk so disrespectfully o' the dead."

A famous surgeon was making the round of a hospital ward with six young students and he held a small discussion and consultation over each bed. Over one case which was rather more serious than the rest, he spent some time and finally he asked each student in turn whether he would operate if he had charge of the case. Solemnly each student answered that he would not operate whereupon the famous surgeon said, "Well, you are all wrong and I shall operate at once." The patient under consideration had offered no remark up to this point but when he heard his fate, he jumped out of bed and grabbed his clothes. "Indade," said he "an' ye'll do nothing av the sort. There's a majority av six to wan agin it an' I'm afther goin' home now."

We have all heard the story of the enraged foreigner who turned to an Englishman who had annoyed him and spat out, "If I knew ze Engleesh for ze box, I blow your nose by damn I am," and of the bewildered Frenchman who turned to his English friend in a restaurant and remarked when the latter expressed his anger at waiting so long to be served, "I do not onderstand. 'Ow can you say 'I am so hongry I am fed up'?" But how many have heard the Swiss example of English as she is spoke, the speaker being a Swiss waiter replying to a guest ordering breakfast: "Tongue is no more, shickken never wos. How you like your ekks voilt? Tight or loose?"

In a certain American town, a man and his wife kept a small saloon but unfortunately he became very ill and being taken to hospital, she was forced to carry on the buiness alone. His friends were very kind and every day one or two of them when passing the hospital would ask how he was and then call in at the saloon to inform his wife who would thank them and ask them to have a drink. An old negro who was engaged upon mending the sidewalk outside became thoroughly envious of seeing so much free hospitality dispensed for such small acts of kindness but scratch his woolly head how he might he could think of no way to benefit by it. However, one morning when on his way to work, he met the porter of the hospital and said to him, "Say, Ephraim, can you tole me how be dat dere Massa Jones?" The porter replied, "Why, suah, Sambo, dis niggah can tole you dat Massa Jones are right dead five ten minutes since." Without another word, the old negro started to run and he arrived breathless at the saloon. He rushed in and commenced to beat upon the counter and in a moment or so out came Mrs. Jones to find out the reason for the hullabaloo and found the old negro almost speechless with excitement. At last he managed to ejaculate, "Say, missus, Massa Jones' right dead five ten minutes since an' an' an' (triumphant outburst) mine's a b'black beer."

In the course of a discussion between two workmen over the customary tankard of beer one of them suddenly burst out laughing, and as the tears streamed down his face the other demanded what he was laughing at, so the first replied with difficulty: "Bill Jones' broke 'is leg." The inquirer asked, "Wotcher larfin abart it for?" so the first said, "Well, it's like this, yer see. 'Is 'ouse were on fire and there was ole Bill on the second story yellin' fitter bust himself for 'elp. We shouted, 'Jump inter the blanket, Bill,' and, blimey, he jumped but we 'adn't got no blanket. Gawd! 'Ow we did larf."

A young man who has recently left school, entered his father's business but so far from emulating his father's example he became chiefly noted for staying out late at night and getting up late in the morning, habits which brought him severe lectures. "You will never get on," said his father, "unless you turn over a new leaf. Remember, it's the early bird that catches the worm." His son merely laughed and queried, "And how about the worm. What did he get for turning out so early?" "My son," replied the father, "that worm hadn't been to bed at all that night; he was on his way home."

* * *

A certain man had an overdraft at his bank for some time and despite frequent reminders failed to take any steps to correct this. At last the bank manager rang him up about the overdraft and asked that it might be liquidated. The business man was distinctly annoyed and he said down the telephone, "Let me see, I was well in credit at the end of last month, wasn't I?" The bank manager replied in the affirmative and was asked how much the balance had been and after a short search he replied, "You were nearly fourteen hundred pounds in credit last month." "Yes" replied the enraged debtor, "and did I write five letters to you and ring you up about it?" and slammed the receiver violently down.

* * *

Despite the tremendous sums of money they were supposed to be making during the war, some business men found themselves continually hard pressed and the foregoing story of the overdraft, recalls the latter sent to a banker by a certain business man explaining why he could not reduce his overdraft:—

"I have been held up, held down and bagged, walked on, sat upon, flattened out and squeezed. First by our Income-tax, the Super Tax, the Excess Profits Tax, War Loans, War Bonds, War Savings Certificates, the Automobile Tax, and by every Society and Organisation that the inventive mind of man has conceived, to extract what I may or may not have in my possession. Next by the Red Cross St. Dunstan's and Children's Homes, Y.M.C.A., and Y.W.C.A., the Salvation Army, the Belgian Relief, the Austrian Relief, the Red Cross, Black Cross and the Double Cross, and every Hospital in the town and country. The Government has governed my business so that I don't know who owns it. I am inspected, suspected, examined and re-examined, informed, required and commanded, so that I don't know who I am, where I am, or why I am here at all. All that I am aware of is that I am supposed to be an inexhaustible source of money for every known need, desire, or hope of the human race; and because I will not sell all that I have, and go out and beg, borrow or steal money to give away, I am cussed, discussed, boycotted, talked to, talked about, lied to, lied about, held up, hung up, robbed and near ruined, and the only reason why I am clinging to life now is to see what the hell happens next."

A profiteer with money to burn had bought a wonderful country house and he set about making it even more wonderful, one of his proposals being a fish pond which should contain eels. "But," said the neighbour to whom he confided this idea, "you can't keep eels in a pond. They have to go down to the sea every year." "Then I won't have them," declared the profiteer, "I allus takes the missus and kids every year but I ain't goin' to take no eels."

A disconsolate individual stood on the steps of the town-hall during a political meeting and a stranger asked him briskly, "Any idea who's talking now or are you only just going in?" The disconsolate one replied very decidedly, "No, I've just come out but Alderman Stiggins is speaking just now." "What's he talking about," said the stranger to which the addressed one replied in dazed fashion, passing his hand over his forehead in a puzzled manner, "Well, to tell the truth, I don't think he said."

This brings to mind the story of the man who got wedged in the front row at a very heated and crowded political meeting and when the adopted candidate was in the middle of a fervid speech, he suddenly got up and demanded, "What did Asquith say in '93?" thereby causing the candidate to lose the thread of his speech. After this irritating question had been repeated several times, the candidate lost his temper and told the interrupter to keep silent instead of which the same question was hurled at him while several sympathisers said, "Yus, wot did Asquith say?" The meeting began to get in an uproar when the interrupter was suddenly seized by stewards and conducted through the packed crowds and pushed into the street battered but happy. Just as he was turning away, one of the stewards asked, "As a matter of curiosity what did Asquith say in '93?" With a grin the wily interrupter replied, "Haven't the remotest notion but I had to get out somehow to catch my train."

An enthusiastic but unskilful motorist went out for a spin in his new car but unfortunately in rounding a somewhat sharp corner, he did it too fast and the car went over in a ditch. He surveyed the damage ruefully and then searched out the nearest telephone for help. The following conversation ensued: "Hello, hello. Send assistance at once. I've turned turtle." A weary voice at the other end of the telephone replied, "My dear sir, this is a garage. What you want is an aquarium."

A severe quarrel had happened during a meeting of the Urban District Council and at the conclusion of the heated argument, one irate member stood up and told another irate member that he was not fit to feed pigs. The gentleman thus stigmatised, indignantly asked the Chairman for protection and that worthy requested the offender to withdraw his statement and to apologise which he did in the following manner : "Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I must apologise both to you and to Mr. Stiggins for having said that he is not fit to feed pigs and I beg to withdraw that statement. I think that he is fit to feed pigs."

A man was stranded in London with only half-a-crown in his pocket, but he found that he would need three shillings for his night's lodging, so after some thought he decided on the following procedure. He went to a pawnbroker and asked him to pawn the half-crown for a shilling and he stepped out of the shop with the shilling and the pawn ticket. Then he went to a man who was standing near and asked if he would give him two shillings for the pawn-ticket for half-a-crown. The stranger assented willingly and gave the two shillings and received the ticket in exchange. The stranded man thus obtained the required three shillings. Someone appears to have lost during the two transactions. Who was it and how much did he lose?

Work over for the day, a group of commercial travellers were seated round the fire listening in quiet amusement to the remark of a rather bumptious youngster who seemed to be an authority on everything under the sun. An old man who was sitting in the arm chair at the side of the fire, in hitching up one trouser leg displayed a sock of gorgeous hue, every colour of the rainbow mingled in ghastly combination. It was impossible to keep the eyes from it and at last the bumptious youth in amazement and admiration addressed the old man, "That's rather a striking colour." The owner of the sock glanced down indifferently and remarked, "Yes, it is rather striking; in fact, I am almost certain that it is absolutely unique." The youth thought for a moment and seeing a chance to show his wit, he leaned forward and said, "Hardly unique, sir, for I am willing to bet you drinks all round that I can produce another sock like it in a few minutes." The old man accepted the wager and the youth looked round triumphantly and said, "I think you pay. What about the sock on your other foot?" With a quiet smile his senior responded, "On the contrary, young man, you have to pay. I've caught many a pushing young fellow like you," and pulling up the other trouser leg, he displayed to the gathering an ordinary plain black sock.

The road-hog in a motor-car is not only a danger to the pedestrian but a constant source of worry to anyone who happens to be unfortunate enough to have to accept a lift from him. There is the case of the man who was speeding along at some 50 miles an hour over a dangerous road and the other occupant of the car whispered to him, "Would you mind driving a bit slower, old man?" to which the driver replied, "Why, you're not getting scared, are you?" The unfortunate friend with a white-faced attempt at jauntiness answered, "Oh no, nothing like that, but I'd hate to take an unfair advantage of my life insurance company."

A certain man had just purchased a new house and to his disgust he found that the whole of the garden was choked with old tins, rusty wire, dilapidated iron bedsteads and other miscellaneous *débris*. In angry tones he demanded of the landlord what he was to do with such rubbish, and the latter replied, "Well, sir, the Ford works are just along the road and they are only too pleased to get such stuff." The new owner brightened up at this advice and had the collection carted to the Ford works. A few days later to his surprise an apparently new Ford drove up to his front entrance and the driver asked to see him, so he went out and the driver greeted him with, "I've brought back your Ford, sir, but it must have had a terrible smash."

Ford stories are, of course, innumerable, but one of the best seems to be that of the salesman who in dealing with a prospective buyer pointed to a particular car and said, "Now, look at that car. Last Friday I took it out for a trial run and everything went smoothly for twenty miles until suddenly it stopped. I got out, opened the bonnet and to my surprise found that they had forgotten to put in an engine." The customer looked thoroughly incredulous and demanded derisively, "Do you mean to say that this particular Ford went for twenty miles without an engine." Unabashed the salesman replied, "Yes, sir, I do. Believe me or believe me not, that car ran twenty miles on its reputation."

A man returning early from the office found his wife being kissed by his best friend, so, with natural indignation, he burst into a long tirade against this betrayal of his trust: "We have been friends, man and boy, for over 20 years. I have allowed you the run of my house. I have placed implicit confidence in you, treating you like a brother, and yet I come home and find you to be a snake in the grass. I find you with my wife in your arms, kissing her. I am deeply pained, nay, I am disgusted and—and—and for the Lord's sake, stop kissing her while I am talking to you."

A Bond Street tailor was remonstrating with an aristocratic but impecunious client whose bill was mounting rapidly without any signs of ever being reduced. At last the debtor admitted that there was not the slightest chance of the bill being paid as he had not got the money. On hearing this the tailor waxed exceedingly angry! "I've never heard of such a thing in my life. It's absolute dishonesty. You've no money and yet you come in here and order suit after suit." On hearing this the impecunious client also became indignant and ejaculated, "Damn it all, man, you can't expect me to go about naked."

An American commercial traveller was sitting in the commercial room of a hotel in the North of England, expatiating upon the virtues of everything that came from America until every other occupant of the room was thoroughly disgusted with the belauded excellence of American manufactures. Those who had finished their work stole away but others had to remain and listen. No one had ventured to try and stop the flow of eloquence but at last one senior member turned round from his desk and said, "I have listened to your remarks on American goods and manufacturers for some time and I would like to say that you Americans can't hold a candle to the stuff which my firm turns out." The American was somewhat disconcerted and said, "What's your line?" As he turned round to resume his work, the old man replied curtly, "Gunpowder."

First Bloke (out on strike): "Been outer work long, Bill?"

Second Bloke: "Weeks an' weeks."

First Bloke: "'Ard luck."

Second Bloke: "'Tis 'ard luck, when a bloke's willing to strike an' 'e can't get a job."

Ikenstein found that his wholesale clothing business was declining rapidly so he thought out a scheme by which he might profitably get rid of some stock. To a hundred customers he sent a sample parcel, carriage paid, of boys' suits and in the covering letter, said that he hoped the sample of a dozen suits would be purchased and also result in further orders. Each parcel contained, as if by mistake in packing, 13 suits instead of 12, but the price per dozen invoiced covered the extra suit. Ikenstein then sat him down in comfortable anticipation chuckling, "Everyone will bite. They think they're getting a nice suit for nothing." A week later the post brought 100 letters, regretting that the suits did not interest the recipients. returning the invoice and advis- the recipients, returning the invoice and advis- quently the 100 parcels came back, carriage forward, and each parcel contained exactly twelve suits.

The truth is apt to be somewhat awkward at times as the following yarn illustrates. The editor of a certain journal had been out to lunch and when he returned, his new office-boy greeted him with "A man called to see you while you were out but he wouldn't give his name." "Oh really," replied the editor, "and what did he want?" The office-boy volunteered, "He said that he had come to give you a good thrashing." "Humph," grunted the editor, "and what did you say?" The response was somewhat startling, "Why, sir. I told him that I was sorry that you were out."

Doctors invariably say pleasant things to their patients, presumably with the desire to cheer them up, though some patients do not receive such assurances with gratitude. An example is given in the case of the doctor who greeted his patient: "You cough more easily this morning." The weary patient replied: "I ought to. I've been practising all night."

Even a more ludicrous medical story is that of the doctor who had been called in by a patient with practically nothing wrong with him. Said the doctor in an offhand manner, "It's nothing to worry about—just a little boil on the back of your neck. Still, you'd better keep your eye on it."

CHURCH AND STAGE.

CHURCH AND STAGE.

A very amusing and perfectly true clerical story concerns an Irish clergyman who was revisiting Cowes in the Isle of Wight to preach at a certain church. He startled the congregation by declaring with much emotion that it was always a pleasure for him to visit Cowes but what pleased him most on that occasion was to see so many "old Cowes faces looking up at him." He however quite failed to see why the congregation tittered.

The clergyman's eloquence may have been at fault but he was more than a little annoyed to find that an old gentleman fell asleep during the sermon on two consecutive Sundays so after the service on the second Sunday, he spoke to the little boy who accompanied the sleeper and learned that it was his grandfather. "Well," said the clergyman, "if you will only keep him awake during my sermons, I will give you a penny each week." The boy was quite willing to enter into such an agreement and for the next fortnight, the old gentleman listened most attentively to the sermon but the third week again found him soundly asleep. The clergyman was very vexed and he sent for the boy and said to him, "I am very angry with you. I promised to give you a penny a week to keep your grandpa awake." "Yes," replied the little boy, "but grandpa now gives me sixpence not to disturb him."

Another good darky story is that in which a certain clergyman's wife in America heard that her coloured cook had married for the fourth time at the age of seventy. "Why, Aunt Dinah," she exclaimed in surprise, "you surely haven't married again!" "Yassum, I has," was the smiling reply. "Jes' as of'en as de Lawd takes 'em, so will I."

A coloured preacher in Alabama had at one time served a short sentence in jail and was fearful lest his congregation should discover the fact as in later years he had been a model of rectitude. One Sunday on rising to begin his sermon, his heart sank to see a former cell mate sitting in the front row. Quick thinking was necessary so fixing his eye on the unwelcome guest, the preacher announced solemnly, "Ah takes mah text dis mo'nin' from de sixty-fo'th chaptah and fo' hundredth verse of de book of Job which says: 'Dem as sees and knows me, and says nothin', dem will Ah see later'."

Some people's ideas on religion are most peculiar and the Southern States of America, subject as they are to intensely fervid religious revivals, must give the most peculiar views of all if the following may be taken as an example. An old darky got up one night at a revival meeting and said: "Brudder an' sisters, you knows an' I knows dat I ain't been what I oughter been. I'se robbed henroosts an' stole hawgs, an' tole lies, an' slashed folks wi' mah razor, an' shot craps, an' cussed an' swore; but I thank de Lord der's one thing I ain't nebber done; I ain't nebber lost mah religion."

There was a terrible hullabaloo in court because the Bible could not be found and at last after a delay it was announced that a bull pup had eaten it. "Never mind," grumbled the magistrate, "make the witness kiss the pup; we haven't time to adjourn the court while you get a new Bible."

A navvy whose work took him past Westminster Abbey every day for some months had never seen the inside of the Abbey so one day when passing with a fellow-workman he decided to look inside. By chance just as he did so, the congregation was saying in unison, "Good Lord, deliver us." Hastily the navvy withdrew and in amazed accents explained to his companion: "When I looked inside, they all shouted 'Good Lord, deliver us.' Blime, one 'ud think they'd never seen a navvy afore."

A certain curate was even more nervous than the so-called typical curate and at his lodgings he was so timid that he never asked for a single thing despite the willingness of the landlady and her daughter to help him as much as possible. One day, however, he appeared at the top of the stairs and mildly asked if he might have a glass of water. The landlady responded with willingness and he disappeared into his room but in two minutes he appeared again and asked if he might have another glass of water and again he was obliged. To the amazement of the landlady he asked for a third glass and then a fourth. This conduct caused the landlady so much curiosity that she asked why he needed so many glasses of water. In a meek deprecating voice he replied: "Well, as a matter of fact my room is on fire."

This brings to mind the story of the man who had dined too well and had wandered all over the maze of platforms at Clanham Junction trying to find his right train but finding nothing but wrong ones. At last he got settled down in a train to sleep hiccoughing the while. Opposite him sat a severe looking curate who unable to stand the sight any longer leaned forward and said, "My good man, do you know where you are going?" The alcoholic one sleepily opened an eye and replied, "Croydon." In indignation the curate replied, "No you are not. My poor man, you are going to Hell." The man opened both eyes in surprise and said, wearily, "Lord, I'm in the wrong train again."

A very prosy curate was preaching in a church in the East End and he had chosen for his sermon the subject of the prophets. He took them one by one and discussed them at length and the sermon dragged on for nearly an hour. When he came to Malachi, his voice took an interrogatory turn and the question rang out, "Where shall we put Malachi?" Then from the front pew came a clear and disgruntled growl from a workman who was standing up, "'E can 'ave my seat, guv'ner. I'm goin' 'ome."

A certain Bishop who dearly loved a glass of good wine with his dinner, was once dining with the rector of a country parish who was a confirmed teetotaller. When they sat down to dinner, the Bishop discovered to his dismay that only water had been provided but the rector who knew his predilection leaned over and whispered: "We never have anything but water upon the table but you will find a bottle of wine in your room in case you would like a glass before you go to bed." Some weeks later it happened that the rector was dining with the Bishop and the former to his consternation discovered that no water had been provided for him. The Bishop noticed his discomfiture and, with a twinkle in his eye, remarked, "You will find a bottle of water in your room, in case you would care for a glass before you go to bed."

At dinner the Bishop had on his right a lady whose sole conversation consisted of descriptions of the illnesses from which she had suffered furthermore, she was firmly convinced that sooner or later she would become paralysed.

Towards the end of dinner she turned in an agitated manner to the man on her right and cried, "I knew it would happen sometime. My left leg is comletely paralysed. There's no feeling in it. Whatever shall I do?" The man on her right was desperately thinking of some suitable reply when the Bishop intervened, "I wouldn't worry quite so much, madam. It happens to be my leg that you are pinching so hard."

An excellent example of clerical wit is given in the story of the orator who was wont to air his views in Hyde Park and one occasion when having imbibed too freely afterwards, he found himself in a district train seated opposite a very mild-looking curate. Truculently the orator opened a conversation, "It may interest you to know that I don't believe in the existence of 'eaven." The curate seeing his condition and not being particularly interested merely nodded and went on reading his paper but the orator was not to be denied, "You don't quite realise what I'm trying to make clear. I want you to understand that I don't believe for a solitary, single moment that such a plact as 'eaven exists." The curate looked up and answered pleasantly, "All right, all right. Then go to hell, only don't make quite so much fuss about it."

A comedienne who filled only a very minor part in the bill at a certain provincial music hall was asked by the comedy juggler, also unimportant, to sup with him after the show. In a haughty voice she replied, "I only accept invitations from the top of the bill." Quite unperturbed the juggler answered, "Is that so? Well you should have a good time next week. They're performing seals."

It is said that Sir Owen Seaman, the editor of "Punch," and the late George Grossmith were once walking down the Strand when the latter remarked, "Surely you must get hundreds of funny stories sent in to 'Punch' every week." The great editor replied, "Oh, thousands." They walked on in silence for a few yards, and Grossmith remarked, "Then why don't you publish some of them."

The famous pianist Rachmaninoff often tells a story about his own childhood which runs: "When I was very little, I played at a reception at a Russian count's house and for an urchin of seven I flatter myself that I swung through Beethoven's 'Kreutzer Sonata' pretty successfully. The 'Kreutzer' as you know, has in it several long and impressive rests. Well, in one of these rests, the count's wife, a motherly old lady, leaned forward, patted me on the shoulder and said, 'Play us something you know, dear.' "

A little boy was sitting proudly with his father in the stalls of a certain theatre, enjoying the show thoroughly. His father happened to glance round and noticed that the boy's mouth was wide open so he remarked reprovingly, "Johnnie, do you know that your mouth is wide open?" In return came the disconcerting reply, "Of course I do, daddy. Why I opened it myself."

This recalls a good example of youthful precocity. The youthful son and heir had been to a public school for his first term and when the Christmas holidays arrived, he was taken to a theatre but owing to bookings being awkward he had to be accommodated with a seat in the stalls in the row in front of his proud parents. During the interval, a beautiful lady who was sitting in the next seat to him, leaned over to him and offering her box of chocolates, said, "Are you all alone?" With a semi-glance over his shoulder, he replied, "Ssssh. Don't speak so loud. My people are behind."

Even the works of George Bernard Shaw are not so widely known as he would care to believe if one can place credence in the story of the dear old lady who went with her nephew to the theatre to see the production of "Arms and the Man." During an interval she turned to her nephew and remarked, "Do you know, John, it reminds me so much of 'The Chocolate Soldier'."

A story is told of an old coster who took his wife to see the "Midsummer Night's Dream," when it was revived in London. They sat in the gallery and were perusing the programme and 'Arry was heard to comment, "Blime, 'Arriet, these blikin' fairies 'as got funny names. 'Ere's O beery 'un an' Tight Anna."

It is strange what peculiar things one overhears at one time or another. This particular incident rather suggests that the speaker had gazed upon the vintage was 'twas crimson though the actual phraseology must be almost unique. It happened in the stalls at "Chu Chin Chow" on a certain Saturday night in 1920. I was sitting with a friend and in the row in front were five or six young men of blithesome and frolicsome tendency. The man directly in front was describing someone who had done him a good turn and his actual words were, "Yes, he's a jolly nice man. Do you know, he gave me a glass of salt and water and put his finger down my throat."

A young curate was arguing with one of his friends who followed horse-racing very closely with indifferent luck and trying to persuade him to give it up. Said the curate pleadingly, "But when you ever have a chance to consider it seriously for a moment, don't you think betting is wrong?" Thrusting his hands gloomily to the bottom of his empty pockets, the friend replied, "Well, the way I bet generally is."

This brings to mind the abbreviated dictum which made the reputation of another critic who has just died. In his earlier days before fame came his way, he was sent to criticise a show called "Pure as snow." Duly he went to see the show and his criticism as it appeared in the paper he represented read simply, "It was not pure as snow."

A well-known dramatic critic was so bored with a certain show which he had to attend that after a short time he went to sleep and remained asleep until the end when he was awakened by a friend with the remark, "How on earth can you give an opinion when you have been asleep nearly the whole time?" Complacently the critic replied, "Sleep, my friend, is an expression of opinion."

DAY BY DAY.

DAY BY DAY.

Mike, in common with most of his friends, got full to the brim with good liquor on the occasion of the annual fair and as they showed such eagerness to fight anything and anybody, wholesale arrests took place. The small village lock-up was soon full to overflowing and when Mike's turn came to be embraced by the law, there was no more room left so he was placed in the workshop next door, which belonged to the local undertaker, and was laid in a coffin. In the morning, Mike was feeling thoroughly ill and it was with the greatest difficulty that he managed to get one eye open and it was a terrible shock to find himself lying in a coffin. He peered round cautiously and eventually managed to sit upright and was horrified to find himself surrounded by empty coffins. With a wild shriek he scrambled out of the coffin, and burst through the door yelling, "Begorra, I'm late for the resurrection."

Two Irishmen met in the street one day. "Hallo, Mike!" said the first, "I haven't seen ye for a long toime." "No," replied the other, "I haven't been out of doors for three months." "Sorry to hear that," said his friend, "what was the matter?" "Nothing," answered Mike, "only the magistrate didn't think so."

Mrs. O'Brien: "They say it's not polite to be helped twice, Mr. Flaherty, but ye'll take another piece of my cake, won't ye?"

Flaherty: "Indade, Oi will that, Mrs. O'Brien. Shure, it's the height of politeness to ate a second piece av such cake as this."

America is no longer the place wherein certain localities every man went armed to the teeth and the man who drew four aces at poker went in momentary danger of his life but in olden days the following incident was quite possible. Alkali Ike went up to the bartender in one of the twenty grog saloons of Burnt Powder, Arizona, and asked him, "Say, Joe, did Pimply Pete tell you that he thought I'd a hasty temper?" "Why no," replied Joe, "not that I can remember. "That's too bad," replied Ike. "Then I've killed an innocent man."

Inquisitive people in America are known as "rubber-necks." In connection with this term a story is told of an Englishman who was paying his first visit to America. He was riding in a street car when a woman entered with a child and sat opposite to him. It was the ugliest child that he had ever seen and he gazed at it in wonder. Wonder grew into fascination and he could not take his eyes off the child's face. The mother stood his rigid glare for several minutes and then leaned over and said clearly, "Rubber." The Englishman's face relaxed at once and with a sigh of relief he replied, "Thank goodness for that, I thought it was real."

The desire to make the best of everything brings to mind two stories, one Semitic and one Scotch. The first one is of a little boy standing against a fruit barrow in the East End of London. Gazing longingly he says to his father, "Fader, I would like one of dem oranges." The father of keen wit but parsimonious mind replies, "Make faces at de man, Ikey, an' mebbe he'll throw one at you."

The Scotch variety differs somewhat. The family were taking a trip on the sea during their annual summer outing and the wife was heard to say to her husband, "Sandy, blaw wee Johnnie's nose an' let him snuff the ozone."

A good story is told of the ready wit of the Prince of Wales. While driving slowly in a motor through the East End of London, his car was turning a corner when one of the great unwashed lounging there, remarked audibly, "There's another of the idle rich." Without hesitation the Prince turned round and replied, "Rich, perhaps, but damn it all, man, not idle."

The old and trusted butler had been with the family for nearly twenty years and the squire was astounded and angry when he suddenly gave notice to leave. In high dudgeon the squire rang for the butler and asked him, "What is the meaning of this, Jenkins, am I to understand that you really wish to leave my service?" With averted head, Jenkins replied, "Yes, sir." The squire stormed and fumed and demanded the reason but the butler only replied that he would prefer to keep the reason to himself. However the squire insisted on knowing the reason and at last the butler replied, "I would much rather not tell you, sir, but since you insist, sir, the truth of the matter is that I've been with you now for twenty years and I'm tired to death of the sight of you and your family.

During dinner a guest was explaining that during a recent walking tour in the Lake District, in one locality he had come across forked roads with a signpost pointing the way. As he was unable to see what was written on the board he climbed up the post and found that the notice said, "To Keswick 8 miles." Underneath, however, was the illuminating announcement, "If you can't read, ask at the blacksmith's." Most of the guests laughed heartily at the joke but the host could not see it and pondered gloomily. Some time had passed and the incident had been forgotten when suddenly the host's face cleared, he chuckled, grinned, and finally laughed until the tears streamed down his face. Asked for the cause of his mirth, he managed to ejaculate that he had just seen the joke about enquiring at the blacksmith's if you were unable to read. When he had regained composure a little, one of the guests asked what the joke was and the host replied, "Why, perhaps the blacksmith might not be at home."

The proposal to erect a statue at Strasburg to the inventor of *pâtê de fois* opens up a pleasing vista of a series of similar statues to such notable chefs as Ude, Soyer and Vattel, the last-named of whom died by his own hand because the fish was late for dinner. Ude made the famous remark about the English that they have "a hundred religions and only one sauce." Soyer is perhaps the best known of modern times and he now rests under a magnificent mausoleum with the inscription "Soyer tranquille." Why on the other hand should we neglect the inventor of the pancake and mincepie, the Christmas pudding or the haggis? It should be noted that some of these famous chefs served masters who were totally unworthy of their skill. A noted case was that of Prince Kannitz, whose diplomatic skill earned him the title of "the coach man of Europe" and whose invariable dish for dinner every day of the year was a boiled chicken. At last his cook, an artist with a princely salary, begged for some opportunity to show his skill and protested against the invariable boiled chicken. "Would His Highness not make a change to-morrow?" "All right," said the epicure *malgré lui* "to-morrow I'll have it roasted."

A man of some humour had forbidden a persistent attendant on his daughter to haunt the house and at last he was ordered to keep away altogether. One morning he said to his daughter suspiciously, Who was here while I was out last night?" The daughter answered demurely, "No one, father, except Olive." The answer was apparently unsatisfactory for the father demanded, "Are you quite sure?" The daughter replied rather sharply, "I am quite certain that no one except Olive was here last night." "All right," said the father turning away with a twinkle in his eye, "the next time that you see Olive, tell her that she left her pipe on the piano."

One of the greatest Masters in Lunacy was Samuel Warren and according to Henry Hawkins he found his duties "of the highest importance and no little fun." His visits to various asylums to report on them produced many curious adventures. Though he tried to humour the whims of the patients with whom he conversed, he often found the task difficult as in the case of the lunatic who was alternately the Apostle Paul and the Shah of Persia, there being a great deal of uncertainty which would be in existence on the occasion of any particular visit. The brightest example was probably that of the lunatic who told Warren that he had married the devil's daughter and might have been happy but that "we don't get on well with the old folks."

A certain man took a ten shillings ticket in a raffle which a friend was getting up. Some time after he met this friend and asked him the result of the raffle to which the friend replied, "Oh, I won the first prize. Wasn't I lucky?" The questioner then asked who won the second prize so the organiser responded, "My wife won the second prize. Wasn't she lucky?" The questioner agreed that her luck was excellent and demanded who won the third prize to which he got the reply, "My daughter won the third prize. Wasn't she lucky?" As the investor turned away the organiser said, "By the way, you owe me ten shillings. I don't think you ever paid for your ticket." Said the other as he continued on his way, "No, I didn't. Wasn't I lucky?"

A good story was going round some time ago about a man who was gifted with a somewhat bitter wife who disliked his convivial habits. Having dined over well at the Club and stayed out until the sma' wee hours he found himself under the necessity of providing a plausible excuse. His usual ones had worn a little threadbare so eventually he decided that he would say that he had spent the evening with the Smiths. He tried to get into the house unobserved but his wife was on the *qui vive* and sternly demanded from her oscillating husband "Where have you been." Steadying himself he replied "Thash a' right, m'dear. Spent quiet evening with Smish." Quietly she said "That's absurd. The Smiths have been here the whole evening". Then his face took on an expression of obstinacy as he volunteered "Don't care, not at all. 'Smy own story and I'm-hic-going to a schtick to it."

To that story must be added the one of two exhilarated diners who were supporting each other home. Suddenly one of them stopped under a lamp-post and said to the other, "D'you-hic-Bill Smith?" His friend replied, "Bill S-smith? No! Whash-hic-his name?" The first speaker leaned against the lamp-post and regarding his friend with evident surprise replied, "Whose name?"

A story of the last train home:—

First convivial; "Shay ol' man. Whatsh time?"

Second ditto, glancing at his cigarette case; "Friday."

First ditto, with relief: "Goo'. Thish is where I get out."

A good tale is told of Sir George Reid, the famous Australian politician. He was once asked by a somewhat virulent member of the labour party, what was his opinion of mixed bathing. Without hesitation, Sir George replied that from what he had seen of the labour party, he approved of any kind of bathing.

The predicament of the inebriated gentleman who walked round and round the same tree and declared that he was "losht in an impenetrable foresht" and of his friend who was found throwing his stick into the fountains in Trafalgar Square to teach the lions to swim is nothing to that of the reveller who was clinging lovingly to an electric standard outside Victoria Station and lamenting bitterly. When asked by a policeman what his trouble was, he replied, "Well, it's like this, officer. If I let go, I'll fall down and if I don't let go, I'll miss the last train home."

Probably the former story comes from America as does the one of the lunatic who was invariably to be found sitting quietly in the asylum grounds tapping himself on the head with a little hammer. Usually he did not condescend to reply to inquiries, but one day a sympathetic visitor, who asked him for the reason of his strange habit, elicited the answer: "Because it's so beautiful when I leave off."

This brings to mind the story of another weak-minded inmate who was gifted, nevertheless, with commonsense. He was employed on building operations in the asylum grounds, but the only thing that he seemed to do was to walk about trundling a wheelbarrow upside down. One day a distinguished visitor was inspecting the establishment and he was much intrigued by the sight of the reversed barrow going backwards and forwards in an apparently aimless manner so he sought an opportunity to speak to the man. "Surely," said he, "that is not the proper way to wheel a barrow?" The man replied with a cunning glance, "May be, but, if I turns it t'other way up, they puts bricks in it."

One of the calmest appreciations of one's own talent that comes to mind is that attributed to Whistler, the painter. A rather emotional lady went up to him one day in London and said: "Mr. Whistler, I only know of two painters in the world—yourself and Velasquez." "Madame," replied Whistler "why drag in Velasquez?"

Though the story is hardly parallel, it brings to remembrance that of the rather vapid youth who could talk of nothing but the virtues of a dog which he had recently purchased and the man to whom he was talking became thoroughly bored with the subject but could not escape the flow of canine panegyrics. "The most wonderful dog in the world," repeated the youth, "Not a thing I say that he doesn't understand. And do you know that I only gave ten shillings for him and he knows as much as I do." At this point the victimised listener intervened and queried gently, "Then do you really think he was worth it?"

Old ladies travelling seem to form the basis of a great number of stories and we have a predilection for that of the very fat and very haughty dame who forced her way into an already overcrowded omnibus. She glared round indignantly for some time but no one offered to give her a seat and at last she said in a venomous voice: "If there was a single gentleman in this 'bus, he would offer me his seat." A deadly silence ensued and at last a weedy little man, after regarding her size with wonder but with a mistaken conception of the soft answer that turneth away wrath, struggled out of the small portion of seat he had been occupying and said: "I shall be delighted to make one of three."

This recalls the story of the very haughty dame who was striding majestically along the road with her aristocratic nose well elevated and a tiny husband trailing miserably behind. After walking for some distance, a loafer tried to speak to her but she snuffed and passed by.

He was not to be shaken off, however, and tried to speak again, so in an indignant voice the haughty one said: "How dare you try to speak to me. One more word and I'll call a . . ," At this point the loafer broke in humbly: "I'm sorry, mum, but I thought you might like to know as your old man 'as just fallen down a grating."

A fussy old lady travelling by train worried the guard on every possible occasion by asking if the train stopped at Waterloo and though he assured her on each occasion that it did, she was by no means satisfied and on one occasion she added, "I don't know what will happen to me if it doesn't." Courteously he replied, "Well, madam, if it doesn't, you'll get the biggest bump you ever had in your life."

This brings to mind the story of another old lady who was travelling by a slow train from Waterloo to Southampton and at every stop she poked her head out of the window and asked the guard if it was Winchester. On the whole he managed to hide his feelings very well at this constant and monotonous reiteration and when at last the train did reach Winchester he pulled open the carriage door and seizing her belongings, said, "Here you are, mum. This is Winchester." With a gentle smile she requested him not to take out her luggage, adding, "Thank you, guard, but I am not getting out here. I only wanted to show my little dog Fido where he was born."

An old lady in a crowded 'bus, at the cry of the conductor for fares, commenced to search for her purse, but owing to the uncomfortable squash found it anything but easy. After the struggle had lasted several minutes, the man at her side ventured to address her in a courteous manner: "Naturally I should be glad if I could assist you in any way, but you have already undone my braces twice and I wish to get out at the next stop."

At a certain seaside resort where it was possible to take trips out to sea, an old salt one day found himself with a party of five including one rather offensive individual who talked incessantly and endeavoured to be witty at the boatman's expense. When quite a distance from the shore, the boat began to leak and though the boatman assured his passengers that he could reach the shore before any danger threatened, he thought well to give out his lifebelts, of which there were only four so he deliberately avoided giving one to his offensive passenger who had now lost all his bumptiousness and pathetically asked what he was going to do. "Don't you worry," said the boatman with a chuckle, "you don't want no lifebelt. A man with a head as 'oller as yourn can't sink."

This brings to mind the story of the old sailor who became a tramp and could always extract money or kind by telling a long and pathetic yarn of the hardships he had suffered. To one old dame he told a stirring rigmarole that for the last three years he had been shipwrecked on a desert island with no means whatever of subsistence, no food, no animals nothing but sand. The old lady looked him up and down suspiciously and demanded, "But if there was nothing to eat on the island how did you manage to keep yourself alive for three years?" The old fraud was flabbergasted for a moment but a ready wit came to his aid and he answered in tear-compelling tones, "Everytime, ma'am, that I thought of my home so far away, a lump came into my throat and I swallowed it and that's how I kept myself alive."

Sailors can tell just as tall stories as golfers and fishermen and it is recorded that at the end of a voyage, a young sailor was talking to an old salt and he remarked, "It was a terrible gale and we saw waves over forty feet high." "Tell that to the marines" said the old man.

"I was at sea for fifty years and I never saw waves that high." "Perhaps not," retorted the young sailor, "but things are higher now than they used to be."

A well-known admiral, a martinet on the smallest matters, was making an inspection when suddenly he stopped before a very portly sailor whose medal-ribbon was an inch or so too low down. Screwing his monocle tightly into his eye and fixing the man, the admiral asked: "Did you get that medal for eating, my man?" "No, sir," replied the sailor, whereupon the admiral rapped out: "Then why the devil do you wear it on your stomach?"

A servant girl was taken to hospital suffering from the effects of a dose of poison and she was questioned afterwards as to her motives for taking it. She replied, "Well, I wasn't feeling very well so I went to the missus's cupboard and there was a bottle marked 'Three drops for an infant, six for an adult and a teaspoonful for an emetic.' I knew I wasn't an infant, I wasn't sure about being an adult so I thought I must be the emetic and I took the spoonful."

Jones was walking along Regent Street when he ran into an immaculate friend smoking a cigarette in a holder nearly a foot long. Somewhat taken aback at this super cigarette holder, he demanded, "My dear fellow why on earth are you using a holder of that length?" The other replied airily, "Medical advice, dear boy, simply medical advice. My doctor told me to keep away from cigarettes."

THE ARMY.

THE ARMY.

It was a bitterly cold night and it was indeed an evil spirit which moved the colonel to go round his camp to see if the sentries were on the alert. At one exposed post he came to the sentry omitted to challenge, forgot to salute when the colonel announced his identity and failed to make a lucid answer when asked what were his duties. The colonel was far from pleased and after a little lurid language he demanded the sentry's rifle and told him to go away and act as the officer. The colonel marched up and down in very correct style and when the sentry approached in his role as an officer, the colonel challenged and got his answer but nothing further. The colonel stood rigidly at attention for some time and at last rapped out, "Come along, man. What do you say next?" After a moment's thought the sentry replied in lordly fashion, "It's a bitterly cold night, my man. Here's five shillings for you and when you go off duty, have a good warm drink at my expense in the canteen." The colonel took the joke at his expense in good part and also took the hint.

A very good story is that of the newly formed cavalry squadron which was being drilled. In order that the men might be set a good example, the officer put himself at the head of the men and ordered the sergeant to take command. The sergeant gave the order to dismount on the off-side but hardly was it out of his mouth than he shouted, "As you were," and then again, "Off-side, dismount." Time after time was this little speech repeated accompanied by withering blastitudes from the sergeant. At last the officer turned round and asked, "Sergeant. Who's the blighter who doesn't know his off from his near side?" Without winking an eyelid, the sergeant replied, "You, sir."

It became almost a fetish with some generals during the war that if they asked a question from a junior officer he must have the answer on the tip of his tongue and must be able to say it at once without hesitation. One British general had attached to his corps an American division for training and this same precept had been drummed into them so that when an American general came round to inspect them, the officers were well primed. The general asked, "How many expert riflemen have you in your company?" "Twenty per cent," answered the company officer. "How many sharpshooters?" "Forty per cent," answered the officer smartly but at random. "How many marksmen?" "Seventy-five per cent, sir," was the rapid response. The general totalled up the figures and queried softly, "But how do you make that. The figures you have given me total 135 per cent. of your company." Without a moment's hesitation came back the reply, "Yes, sir. The company is over strength."

To those who are sceptical enough not to believe in palmists and astrologers, the story of Uncle Adolphus should be a lesson. Uncle Adolphus was a cheery old soul and when the war broke out, though he was well over age, he managed to join the Army. He was not a bit worried about the possibility of being killed but he rather wanted to know what Fate had in store for him so he consulted a palmist who proceeded to upset him thoroughly by telling him that he would die a sudden death in an Eastern climate. As he had just appeared in orders as one of the next draft to proceed to Mespot, one can understand that he found the news a little stunning. However Uncle Adolphus had some influence and he wangled things and got to France instead and went through the whole show without a scratch. When he was demobilised, he still could not forget what the palmist had said and he vowed that he would never leave England's shores again, yet the palmist's prophecy came right in the end. Naturally like everyone else, you will want to know how the palmist could be right. It is all very simple. Uncle Adolphus was killed by a boiler bursting in a Turkish bath!

Though the following story appeared in the "Palestine News" and was given as an original yarn during the war, I believe that it had its origin in India many years ago in another form: From the forces in Palestine, an Egyptian interpreter, fourth class, received a week's leave on urgent private business and as he overstayed his leave by several days, a wire was despatched to him ordering an immediate return. As reply came the following wire addressed to the Commander-in-Chief :—My absence is impossible. Someone has removed my wife. My God ! I am annoyed."

A true story of the Army of Occupation in Germany concerns an attempt by two English officers to obtain eggs from a German *hausfrau* who knew no English while they knew no German. One of the officers had a well-deserved reputation for obtaining almost anything he wanted throughout the campaign but on this occasion though he said "eggs" in many different ways, the *frau* could not understand so at last he took out his notebook and drew a very creditable oval to represent an egg whereupon the good lady showed the first sign of understanding so the officer put in front of the oval an 8 to show the number of eggs wanted. On seeing this she shook her head and taking the pencil wrote down 52 which caused them both to burst into laughter as she obviously thought that they were taking a census. Then the second officer had a shot at explaining. He squatted down on his haunches, made absurd noises and flapped his arms. Then the light of understanding came over the face of the *hausfrau* and with a comprehending smile she waddled away. Five or ten minutes the officers waited and then with a thunderous accompaniment she returned.....dragging a rusty tin bath.

This brings to mind an absurdly untrue story of an officer who was proceeding to Egypt and was held up for a day or two in Gibraltar so with a friend, he decided to cross over to the Spanish town and look round. Someone on board ship told them to be sure and not miss a most excellent special dish of mushrooms cooked in milk which they could get at a certain restaurant so they decided to sample it but unfortunately they could not make the waiter understand and at last one of them took a piece of paper and drew on it what might be considered a passable likeness of a mushroom and a cow and put a figure 2 against the sketch. The waiter studied the drawing in puzzled manner for a while and then suddenly with a beaming smile of comprehension hurried away returning in a short while with two umbrellas and a couple of tickets for a bull-fight.

A good if untrue story is told of a retired colonel of the Indian Army who at the end of his service immolated himself in a small country town in England and spent the rest of his days in grousing about the intense cold whether it happened to be in the middle of summer or winter, in fact it became such an obsession that he could talk of little else. When eventually he did die it was found in his will that he wished to be cremated and arrangements were duly made and in time he was consigned to the oven. After a time, the man in charge thought it would be as well to open the door to see if the disintegration was complete. To his amazement, the old colonel was fully awake and alive at the far end of the oven and when the door was opened, he turned round in anger and shouted, "For God's sake, shut that damned door ; this is the first time I've been warm since I left India."

Inoculation was not compulsory during the war but those who refused to submit themselves to the tender mercies of the needle were wont to find themselves looked upon with disfavour by the authorities. Three officers of a Field Company attached to a certain division did refuse inoculation and continued to refuse though the fact that their names went up on the weekly return to Corps, caused them certain unpleasant interviews. About the same time, as was often the case, the Belgian authorities sent to the Corps, several decorations for distribution to the worthy. After the Corps has retained the larger proportion, the remainder were offered to the divisions in the Corps, three to each, and divisions were instructed to prepare a nominal roll of those recommended and division promptly decided that they should adorn certain members of the staff and a clerk was instructed to prepare the required roll. Fortunately or unfortunately, it happened to be the same clerk whose duty it was to send in the inoculation return and the two lists of names became transposed and to their astonishment, the three Engineer officers found themselves awarded the Legion of Honour, a fact which was the more surprising to everyone because they really deserved it, and a foreign decoration rarely filtered through to the fighting troops.

Long before the war was over, everyone in the British Army had to register his profession or occupation so that he might be classified for demobilisation. A colonel of the old type was making out lists of such particulars and before him came a young officer who said that in civilian life he was a poet. The colonel was nonplussed and ejaculated, "A poet? Good God. A poet." A rapid glance at his papers showed that there was no provision for such a profession and after a moment's thought he said with a kindly smile, "Shall I put down 'no profession', eh? It won't look quite so damn silly."

Private Higginbottom was a man of tender heart and puny physique and he managed to secure the desirable position of batman to his company commander thereby avoiding the shedding of blood, the thought of which was a constant abhorrence to him. His great friend was a young giant who cared for him almost paternally and one day he made the very unwise admission that he had never killed a German, a fact which filled the tall warrior with amazement. Shortly afterwards the battalion had a show and captured their trenches with ease. When it was over, the call came along the line for Private Higginbottom and the little man eventually made his way to the place whence came the call. His gigantic friend looked over the top of the trench and seizing him by the collar lifted him over and said, "Higgy, you're in luck's way. Look in this shell hole. I've got two of them at the end of my bayonet but I've kept 'em for you."

Private Jones was a meek little soul of indifferent physique who in private life was some sort of a clerk who had never seen anything rougher in his life than a football match. Yet like thousands of others, the time came when his physique no longer prevented him from being forcibly propelled into the Army and when he was sent to France with a draft the thought of the imminent possibility of having to shed blood revolted his soul. But he was placed in the hands of instructors in the base camp who tried to instil into him the joys of killing Germans and seeing blood flow. Gas instructors took him into smelly chambers and lectured him on the horried deaths that resulted from gas; bayonet-fighting experts made him shudder with explanations of the best places in a German anatomy for inserting the bayonet, exhorting him the while to see red; bombing enthusiasts made his flesh creep with stories of the disintegration of numberless Boche by harmless looking bombs, and life began to seem like a perpetual nightmare to Private Jones. At the end of one particularly bloodthirsty lecture, when the lecturer asked the usual "Now would anyone like to answer any questions?" a thin small piping voice came from Private Jones, "Please, sir, can you tell me how to get a transfer to the Army Service Corps?"

An illustration of the British temperament during the war, a temperament which the Germans could never understand, is provided by the obviously untrue story of a British officer who was captured and for some supposed offence was sentenced to death by court-martial. The news was conveyed to him in his cell and he was informed that he would be shot at eight o'clock the next morning. To their astonishment he burst out laughing and continued to laugh until the tears rolled down his face. The German wonderment turned to curiosity and finally to fury but for some time he would not enlighten them as to the reason of his mirth. Eventually he managed to ejaculate, "Shoot me at eight in the morning? You can't do it.'' In amazement the German officer asked, ''And why not, mein herr?'' Back came the laughing reply, "Because I never get up till ten."

The vicar of a country village was walking along the road during the war when he met the mother of a soldier who had been born in the parish and was on active service. She was looking very sad so he asked her if she had received bad news whereupon she replied in the affirmative. "Have you received word from the War Office?'' he asked. "No,'' she replied, "I received word from him.'' The vicar was very perplexed and said, "But how can that be?'' "It's true,'' she responded. "Here is the letter; read it for yourself.'' The letter contained only one sentence—Dear Mother, I am now in the Holy Land.

A soldier's wife employed in a munition factory during the war, rushed to the foreman one day crying bitterly. At first he could not get a sensible word out of her but at last she tearfully expressed her opinion that he was dead. He asked her what made her think so and she replied that she had had a telegram from the War Office to say so. He noticed that the telegram in her hand was unopened and he asked why. Sobbingly she said, "I know he's dead but I daren't open it." "Come, come," he said soothingly." How can you know that he's dead if you haven't seen what the telegram says. Open it and see." She refused to open the telegram but at last she consented that the foreman should open it which he did while she listened prepared for the worst. He read it through and grinned, "Why it's nothing to worry about at all. This is from Salonika and he's quite all right." She asked what it said and he read out, "Send more money." In an instant her tears passed away and clenching her fists with anger, she spat out, "Oh he does, does he? Well, the —won't get it."

A certain young recruit was being trained to be a gunner but his intelligence was much below the normal and at last the instructor in desperation asked him, "How much does a six-pound shell weigh?" After a period of thought the embryo gunner replied that he did not know. This confession nearly broke the instructor's recruit-hardened heart but he ventured to ask, "Well, what time does the twelve o'clock train leave," whereupon the recruit replied, "Why twelve o'clock." This heartened the instructor and again he ventured: "All right then, how much does a six-pound shell weigh?" "Ah," said the would-be gunner, a great light dawning upon him. "Twelve pounds, of course."

One day during the bitter winter of 1917 in Flanders, a certain general commanding an army corps woke up in the early morning and decided that it would be a good idea to go round the trenches so after a hot bath and a comfortable breakfast, he was whirled away in his car to within reasonable distance of the line. It was raining slightly and was altogether cold and miserable and the first man he encountered in the front line was a shivering, unkempt sentry peering through a periscope while his mate slept uncomfortably on the firestep below him. The general stepped up briskly and said "Good morning" so the sentry turned round and seeing red tabs saluted as smartly as he could. The general however was in one of his hearty moods and rapped out, "The Germans are advancing. What are you going to do?" The sentry was too cold and weary to take it in at once and he was just turning to his periscope for confirmation when the general stopped him, "Never mind about that. The Germans are advancing. What are you going to do?" In desperation, the sentry bent down and tapped his mate on the shoulder and said to him, "Bill, they Germans are advancin'." In response, a sleepy voice grunted out, "Garn, don't be so ruddy silly." He relapsed into slumber again and the general passed along in deadly silence.

A young subaltern of sporting propensities was being transferred from one battalion to another and to his new C.O. was sent a letter stating that he was a good officer but badly addicted to betting on anything and everything, a habit of which he needed curing. The first night in mess, the new officer was very quiet and it was not until the meal was nearly over that he ventured an opinion. The colonel had been talking at some length about his service in India and the subaltern remarked, "It's an extraordinary thing, sir, that everyone who has served in India should have a purple patch in the small of the back." The colonel was taken aback and at last managed to splutter, "Stuff and nonsense. Never heard such a damn silly remark." The subaltern replied, "Well, sir, I am willing to bet you five pounds that you have a purple patch in the middle of your back." The colonel was inclined to rate him soundly but seeing a chance to break his habit of absurd betting, he said "Done. Come into the ante-room." Then the colonel pulled off his tunic and shirt and triumphantly disclosed that he had no purple patch, whereupon the subaltern paid up his five pounds. The next morning the colonel wrote a cheerful note to the C.O. of the former battalion describing the incident and remarking that he hoped it would be a lesson to the rash youth. He was both crestfallen and enraged when he received a note back to say, "Not a bit of use. He bet me ten pounds that he would make you take off your shirt in mess the first night he was there."

Ingenuity in answering examination questions is always useful but it is not necessarily successful, and we imagine that the young subaltern who was faced with the question as to how it is possible to determine the North by means of a watch, did not find his witty suggestion of much utility in obtaining marks. He pondered deeply for some time but could not remember which hand was pointed to the sun or what happened afterwards and at last in desperation he wrote down. "Tie a piece of string to the watch. Whirl it several times round the head and then let go. The watch will go West and thus it will be easy to determine the other points of the compass."

Somewhere in France, the battalion orderly officer received a bitter complaint about the soup that was being issued so he went down to the lines and tasted it. He could detect nothing very much wrong and said so upon which the chief complainant replied, "I think there's earth in it, sir." The officer tasted the soup again and detected a faint earthy flavour but thinking the complaint frivolous and exaggerated he said, "Yes, I think there is a slight flavour but it's so slight that it is not worthwhile making a fuss about. You're on active service now and there are lots of little things that you will have to put up with. Remember that you came out here to fight for your country." Standing firmly to attention and without moving an eyelash, the chief complainant replied, "Yes, sir, but I didn't come out here to eat it.

A good story of the follies of Armistice Night. A man met a business friend whose face was badly scarred so he asked, "How on earth did you get that scar on your face?" To which he got the reply, "I got that jumping through a plate-glass window on Armistice Night." "What on earth did you do that for?" Whereupon the scarred one replied, "Oh, I don't know. But it seemed a good idea at the time."

The orderly officer hearing that there was bitter grumbling in a certain dining room, hastened over and was requested by one of the men to taste the contents of a mug. He complied with the request and remarked to the orderly sergeant, "I don't see any reason for complaint. That's very good soup." The sergeant replied, "That's exactly what the complaint's about, sir. The cook says it's coffee."

Working parties were one of the greatest pests in the life of the P.B.I. and the so-called rests behind the line were generally occupied in performing manual labour. A good Mesopotamian yarn is that of a certain digging party detailed for duty on a Sunday when they were supposed to be at rest. The work was long and weary and the officer in charge heard the following peroration proceeding in disgusted tones on the other side of the traverse: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth and all that therein is and on the seventh day up comes the Loyal North Lancs and digs the whole ruddy lot up again."

The newly-joined subaltern found himself drawn at bridge as partner to the colonel, a man of rubicund countenance and hob-nailed liver. The cards were dealt and the adjutant went one no-trump, the callow subaltern and his other opponent passed and the colonel said two diamonds. Without looking at his cards, the adjutant said two no-trumps and the other players being silent, the colonel went three diamonds and the original caller said three no-trumps and was triumphantly doubled by the colonel who sat back in his chair and gloated over his six diamonds headed by the ace, king, queen, knave, ten. The callow subaltern looked at his hand and led a heart to the dismay of the colonel whose eye grew fiery. The trick was taken in dummy and a spade was led and the trick was taken by the subaltern who then proceeded to lead a club. This time the colonel began to grow a beautiful apoplectic purple and when, as chance would have it, the lead once again fell into the subaltern's hand and he led another club, the colonel could no longer contain himself at the thought of all his wasting diamonds and leaning over the table he ground out, "Didn't you hear me call diamonds?" to which the subaltern answered "Yes, sir." "Then," shouted the enraged colonel, "Why the devil didn't you lead a diamond?" Calmly the subaltern glanced through his hand and replied, "For exactly the same reason, sir, that a Manx cat does not wag its tail."

A certain prominent jockey received a commission in the armoured-car squadron which was operating in Western Egypt against the Senussi. One night several Army Service Corps officers were dining with them in mess and the conversation turned to horses. The jockey was very quiet during dinner and took no part in the discussion and the supply officer on his right turned to him and said, "Do you ride?" The indignant jockey made no reply at the time and when he was ragged by his own officers for his unusual silence, he burst out, "Do you ride? Me ride 'orses? Ker-ist, me ride 'orses."

A story is told of two battalions passing each other at night in the murkiness of the Ypres Salient. From one battalion a voice rang out, "What battalion's that?" and the answer came back, "West Riding. Who are you?" In reply to this a solitary voice rang out wearily, "Guards, blinkin' well walkin'."

A good story is told that the Prince of Wales was once motoring along the road between Abeele and Steenvorde when he noticed a flying officer by the side of the road, tinkering with a broken-down motor-cycle. He stopped his car at once and asked if he could help in any way. The flying man responded that he thought he could manage and on seeing the face of the inquirer he added, "I seem to know your face jolly well but I don't remember your name. What is your name? H. R. H. answered diffidently, "Well, as a matter of fact I'm the Prince of Wales." The flying officer looked at him with an incredulous twinkle in his eye, the look that suspects a leg-pull, and answered, "That's funny because I happen to be King George. Fancy running across you like this."

A story is told of the first time that the American troops went into the line, when one of the companies in the line was detailed to send down a guide for the relieving American company. From the rendezvous they started off in single file up a communication trench and they had not gone very far when the guide turned round to the officer following and said in a hoarse whisper, "Broken duck-board, sir," and the message was whispered all down the line, "Broken duck-board." A few yards further on the guide whispered, "Shell-hole in front, sir" and again the message was whispered down the line. The next minute the guide volunteered in an almost inaudible voice, "Mind the barbed wire, sir," and the message had just started on its journey back when a Very light went up fully 500 yards ahead, so the American officer tapped the guide on the back and asked how far ahead was the front line. The guide whispered back, "About a quarter of a mile, sir." "Then," said the American indignantly, "Say, then, what are you whispering for?" and back came an equally indignant wheeze, "I'm not whispering, sir, I've got a cold."

A young officer during the course of a lecture to his platoon was emphasising that every man when in the line on active service should send in a report if he saw anything of an unusal nature. Long and earnestly he discoursed upon the subject of reports and went out of his way to explain the nature of unusual happenings. Then he started to ask questions and turning round to the black sheep of the platoon he said, "Now, Private Spicer, supposing that you were on duty in the ditch at the side of this road and you saw a battleship coming across the field, what would you do?" Spicer had been enjoying a peaceful doze and had no notion what the lecture was about, but he was a man of resource and answered promptly, "I should sign the pledge, sir."

A journalist had received instructions to visit a certain aerodrome and write up any notes he was able to obtain. He pestered one unfortunate officer with questions and finally suggested that he would like a flip. The officer demurred but the press representative was importunate and finally the officer agreed and they both climbed into a machine. Round and round the 'drome they flew performing stunts which threatened to crash the machine at any moment. Wishing that he had chosen discretion instead of valour, the journalist yelled to the pilot, "For the Lord's sake be careful; I've never been up before." Faintly the answer came back, "Sorry, old bean. NEITHER HAVE I".

At the beginning of the late war, a certain influential man was suffering from delusions, and after several specialists had failed to effect any improvement it was decided to try the power of suggestion. He went to a specialist who, after a little preliminary talk said, "There is really nothing seriously wrong. What has happened is that a little dust has got into your brain and it needs to be removed. I shall give you a little chloroform, remove your brain and clean it and you will be perfectly well." The afflicted man consented and the imaginary operation was performed. When he came round, the doctor said briskly, "That is excellent. If you will call and see me in a fortnight, your brain will be cleaned and ready." Three weeks went by, four weeks and five weeks and still the patient did not call and at last the specialist wrote to him saying that his brain was ready for replacement. In reply came a brief note "Dear Sir,—I have been appointed to an important post in the War Office so that I shall not need my brain any longer. Yours faithfully," etc.

There is a true story of a certain pioneer officer in Palestine who cared not a brass anna for anything or anybody. His own pony having developed a sore back, he took to riding a 16-hand black mule, despite the fact that he was but 5 feet 2 in. height himself. Close to his lines was the parade ground of a certain very swagger British cavalry regiment. One day the mule became unmanageable and dashed across this sacred parade ground and the adjutant who happened to be present galloped across and shouted angrily : "What the devil do you mean, sir, by riding across our parade ground in that manner?" Quite unperturbed but equally angry, the pioneer officer, still holding on with grim determination turned in his saddle and shouted : "How the. . . do I know, you. . . fool. Ask this. . . . mule."

Many are the tales that are told of the one and only Hunter-Bunter and one of the best concerns the occasion on which he seized the opportunity to go to a certain siding in the Salient on Christmas morning to wish the compliments of the season to the battalion quietly sleeping in a train while waiting to go into rest. His usual opening phrase, "I am your corps commander," was a bye-word throughout Flanders and generally produced a laugh but it was unfortunate that the morning was too miserable with sleet, wind and rain and tempers were too short for laughing. Still, little things of that sort did not deter Hunter-Bunter and he went round greeting the occupants of carriages with, "I'm your corps commander and I've come to wish you a very Merry Christmas." All went well until he came to a carriage where the occupants were thoroughly tired of the "corps commander" joke and when he pulled open the carriage door, letting in a dismal gust of sleet and said, "I'm your corps commander. ." a husky but determined voice in the corner growled, "And I'm Sir Douglas Haig, so shut the......door."

Another good one is of the time that Hunter-Bunter visited the extreme right of our line where it joined the French sector. Standing before the sentry, he asked him who he was, so the sentry replied, "Number 6505 Private Jones, Sir." The general replied, "Oh, no. You are far more important than that. You are the right hand man of the right hand company of the right hand battalion of the right hand brigade of the right hand division of the British Army and you must realise the responsibility that rests upon you." The sentry looked a little dazed and answered nothing but when he was relieved he went up to his friend and said, "D'yer know 'oo I am?" so his friend replied, "Wotcher gettin' at. Corse I knows 'oo you are. 6505 Bill Jones from 'Oxton." Private Jones replied scornfully, "Then that's where y're bloomin' well wrong. I'm the right 'and man of the right 'and company of the right 'and battalion of the right 'and division of the 'ole blinkin' army an' if the British Army does a right wheel, I'll be markin' time for the rest of me life."

There is a witty tale concerning a certain American colonel during the Civil War. He was not noted for his bravery and generally he was kept as far away from the firing line as possible, but as chance would have it he found himself one day in a very tight corner with a detachment of men while the outlook was very black indeed. He exhorted his men to put up a good fight:

"Fight hard and hang on as long as you can. You may have to retire and if you do, run as hard as you can and......and as I am a little lame, I think I'll start now."

Army manœuvres always have their humorous side and one of the funniest stories on that subject that we remember to have heard concerns the General who turned to his galloper and said :

"Have you got your note-book ? All right then. Please write down any remarks I may make during to-day's operations."

The field-day proceeded and the pow-wow ensued and the commanding officers were called up to listen to words of wisdom. Said the General, clearing his throat :

"Now, Mr. Brown, what was the first remark I made ?"

Mr. Brown consulted his note-book and read out crisply : "Four ruddy umpires ; no ruddy use."

The General intervened tersely : "Thank you. I think I'll do the rest myself."

Another good field-day story concerns manœuvres at Rawalpindi many years ago. The cavalry screens were thrown out and soon got into touch with the result that the following brisk exchange took place between two troopers : First trooper : "Are ye the inimy ?"

Second trooper : "Oi am."

First trooper : "Will ye be afther houldin' me harse while Oi take ye prisoner ?"

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

As so few people appear to know the origin of the famous "ashes" for which Australia and England fight at cricket, it may be interesting to state here that the phrase first appeared in the "Sporting Times" dated September 2 in epitaph form following the famous seven runs victory of the Australian team. It ran as follows:—

In Affectionate Remembrance of
ENGLISH CRICKET

which died at the Oval on August 29, 1882
Deeply lamented by a large circle of friends
and acquaintances.

R.I.P.

N.B.—The body will be cremated and
the ashes taken to Australia.

One of the best Boat Race stories is that of the itinerant preacher who set up a small platform among the crowd waiting to see the race and exhorted them to think of eternal things for the Boat Race was but a bubble. With good humour the crowd listened until the boats came along when several of them joined him on his platform. The preacher became as excited as everyone else but he could not forget what he had been preaching and when they had rowed by he was heard to exclaim, "I say, God bless Cambridge whether they win or lose for Cambridge gave us the blessed Paley."

The knock-out administered to Lord Rawlinson recalls the humble-jumble which appeared in an Indian paper during the football season of 1920-21. It was as follows: "The amateur international association match between Wales and England played at Wolverhampton resulted in a win for Wales. Twenty thousand people were present at Inverleith to watch the match. Scotland had much the better of play during the opening half but the French defence held out."

John Maunsell Richardson was probably the finest rider ever seen at Aintree. He won the Grand National on Disturbance in 1873 and on Reugny in 1874 but owing to a quarrel with the latter's owner after the race, he made a vow that he would never ride in public again and though he was only 28 at the time he never broke his vow. He took part in his first steeplechase at the age of ten, the other horses being ridden by his brother aged eleven and two cousins of seventeen and eighteen. The course was fairly stiff and all the riders were properly dressed in correct racing kit but John was perturbed by the fact that his boots, which had belonged to a deceased uncle were so large that they had to be stuffed with rolls of paper to keep them on. He was leading easily in the race when his horse pulled up suddenly at a fence and John abruptly left the saddle but the boots did not and he lost the race through the time taken in climbing back into the saddle and also into the boots.

Great cricketers have their foibles and peculiarities like other people and it is quite true that Dr. Grace hated to get out. a dislike which is shared by many people. Harry Jupp was a famous batsman of his time, as stolid a batsman as probably there has ever been, who once refused to play a ball because C. I. Thornton happened to be munching an apricot. He was once playing in a small match at Dorking and he was bowled first ball. He picked up the bails, replaced them and took guard again. "Ain't you goin' out, Juppy," said the captain of the opposing side. "No," said Jupp; "not at Dorking;" and he didn't.

In the olden days of cricket, teams did not travel so far to play their matches, and teams from the south visited the north of England but infrequently and Lord Harris tells a very good yarn of Billy Goodhew, who made his first trip into the north to Lancashire to umpire in a match at Old Trafford. He always reminded Lord Harris of the White

Rabbit and on this occasion, when he returned from Lancashire and was asked how he had fared, he replied: "If you pleath, thir, I am very glad to be back in England again."

Football is certainly a strenuous game and sometimes leads to injuries but one can hardly think that it deserves what is said of it by Philip Stubbes in his "Anatomie of Abuses" though it may have been true of his own times. He describes football as "rather a friendly kind of fight than a play or recreation; a bloody and murdering practice than a fellowly sport or pastime. For doth not everyone lie in wait for his adversary, seeking to overthrow him and to pitch him on his nose, though it be upon hard stones, in ditch or dale, in valley or hill, or what place soever it be he careth not, so he have him down. And he that can serve the most of this fashion, he is counted the only fellow, and who but he? So that be this means sometimes their necks are broken, sometimes their backs, sometimes their arms, sometimes one part thrust out of joint, sometimes another........ But whosoever scapeth best goeth not scot-free, but is either sore wounded, and bruised, so as he dieth of it, or else scapeth very hardly ....And hereof groweth envy, malice, rancour, choler, hatred, displeasure, enmity, and what not else; and sometimes fighting, brawling, contention, quarrel picking, murder, homicide and great effusion of blood." The "good old times" do not seem to have been especially propitious for the footballer.

A first-rate true yarn is told of the time of the Shamrock-Columbia race in 1899 when with the idea of advertising the Daily Mail and the Evening News, a huge hoarding was erected on a vacant plot of land in Carmelite Street. This hoarding had the Sandy Hook course painted on it and two miniature yachts were operated from the back. It was called the Evening News Cineyachtograph and as the result of the advertisement it received in the two papers, great crowds assembled to watch the mimic race. The originators had carefully worked out every detail but one—they overlooked the possibility of the yachts becoming becalmed and one evening they found themselves with a waiting crowd of several thousands and nothing doing for each successive telegram from New York brought the news that the wind had died away and that the yachts were drifting. However they were men of ingenuity and such a detail was not to be allowed to spoil their stunt so they took charge of the elements and though there might be no race on the other side of the Atlantic, there began a most exciting one on the banks of the Thames. Puffs of wind arose which filled the Shamrocks sails while the Columbia's flapped idle and slowly the Lipton yacht drew level and then forged ahead amid a hurricane of cheers. But while the cheering was at its height the wind died away and both yachts unaccountably drifted back to where they were before because they had to be kept more or less in their right positions in case of eventualities. The late Mr. Kennedy Jones, one of the operators and originators in telling the story ends, "Finally to our relief, came the cable message that the race was off and the crowds dispersed deploring Sir Thomas Lipton's hard luck and how if this or that gust (for we had several of these spurts) had held only another half-hour, the 'Shamrock' would surely have won, not realising that it was only we who had got the wind up."

Sandy Macnab, the all-round athlete and crack sportsman of his village, entered his name for all events in the local Highland games. The first event was the mile for which there were eight runners and Sandy finished eighth. "Sandy, Sandy," cried one of his friends, "why did ye no run faster?" "Run faster!" he replied scornfully, "an' ye ken ahm resairvin' mysel' for the bagpipe competition."

That discretion is the better part of valour is shown by the story of the man who had been out on a shooting trip at the conclusion of which he was describing his adventures to a circle of admirers. He described one day how he struck the trail of a bear and followed it up practically all day and then finally gave it up. One of his listeners asked what made him give it up after tracking it all day. After thinking for a moment, the hunter shifted his weight nervously from one leg to the other and replied, "Well, to tell the truth, it seemed to me that the trail was getting altogether too fresh."

B. G. D. Rudd, the famous Oxford, South African and Olympic athlete, tells an amusing story of his experiences on the first day he landed in America with the combined Oxford and Cambridge team which was to run against Yale and Harvard, Princeton and Cornell. He was barely off the boat, when an American reporter came up to him and said, "Cap'n Rudd, I hear you received a decoration in the recent fracas. Was that award for bravery?" Rudd continues: "I was rather taken aback and murmured something about, 'Bravery and corruption' which seemed slightly to incense him. He warmed up later though and told me that my suede shoes were the 'dandiest pair of side-walk slappers' he had yet seen. A little later a diminutive lift-boy woke me from a brown study during a thirty-mile-an-hour descent from forty storeys with the stern injunction, 'Ground floor-beat it!' "

Americans appear to have gained a world-wide reputation for exaggeration and the forthcoming story is of an American who has such an obsession for capping other people's stories that he was liable to give offence to those who did not know him. He was on a visit to England and a friend who knew him well took him out to dinner one night having previously warned him to restrain himself. Over the port their host fell rather a victim to the mellowing influences of a good dinner and expounded at length on the splendid golf course he proposed to lay down for his own private use. Said he, "I expect when it is finished it will be no less than seven miles long and four miles broad." This boast was rather too much for the American and leaning earnestly over the table he intervened, "Now that reminds me of a small course that my old dad proposes to make on one of his farms and when it is finished I guess that it will be fifteen miles long and..." at this point his friend gave him a violent kick on the shin under the table to remind him not to draw the long bow too much so he finished up lamely "and......and three inches broad."

Boatmen on rivers have a peculiar habit of charging more or less what they think they will without over much regard for their supposed tariff. This is amply illustrated in the story of the boatman who greeted two customers who had been using one of his punts for five hours with the remark. "Yessir, five hours at three bob an hour. That'll be seventeen bob altogether." Vehemently they protested that it was nothing of the sort but the boatman refused to be convinced and at last one of his patrons went along to his rooms and fetched a ready reckoner with which he triumphantly confronted the boatman. The latter was nothing dismayed however and after looking at the cover he turned round with a you-can't-catch-me expression on his face and remarked, "Yes sir, but this is a last year's ready reckoner."

An old lady of charitable inclinations was very sorry indeed for a shabby but apparently respectable old man who always stood at the street corner near her residence and one day she sent over her maid with half-a-crown and a slip of paper on which was written words of encouragement, "Never despair." The next day, the old man turned up with the slip of paper in a filthy condition and gave the old lady twenty-seven and sixpence with an admiring comment, "Do you know any more ten to one chances, mum?"

It is an old, old story but it has been lately revived with R. Cove Smith, the Cambridge Rugger captain, as hero. He had been playing for his school at football in a very strenuous match and to break the shock gently to his parents regarding his accident, he wired, "Nose broken. Shall I have it set Greek or Roman?"

No matter what the game may be, the referee or umpire always tends to have the worst of it and if he happens to make mistakes or offend the crowd in some way, his life, for the period of the game, becomes a misery. League football is the worst for criticism but even hockey umpires by no means escape criticism as is shown by the story which Mr. A. B. Osmond tells of the amusing experience he had while officiating at Birmingham in the match between the Midlands and the East. In the course of the game, he says, "I caused angry protests from a portion of the crowd by giving a local celebrity off-side four times in ten minutes. There was a murmur of disapproval on the first occasion, a deep growl on the second, nearly an uproar on the third; the fourth was so obvious that a child could have seen it, and suddenly a stentorian voice with a broad Warwickshire accent shouted out, 'That umpire ain't such a ruddy fool as he looks." This saved the situation, the crowd and I roared with laughter. I felt complimented and comforted, and was left in peace for the rest of the game."

One could write more than one volume about the humorous mistakes that may be attributed to that mysterious individual known as the printer's devil. Thousands of mistakes flock to the mind commencing with the man who left all his money to his daughter on condition that she remained a "sprinter" and the English newspaper in India which advertised To Let—One pair brown boots. One of the funniest from the sporting point of view appeared in the "Sportsman" in May 1920, when the result of the Army Boxing Championships, Officers' Heavy-weights, was reported. It was as follows:—

"Final: Lt. W. R. Nicol (R.F.A.) knocked out Lt.-General Lord Rawlinson, Commanding at Aldershot."

It will be remembered that after the war two Chinese undergradutes at Cambridge very nearly obtained Blues at tennis and actually did at billiards. They were always seen together and though everyone knew that that they were Wei and Wu, very few people knew which was Wei and which Wu and this induced one of my friends to break into verse as follows under the heading of "Another 'Chinese Puzzle.'"

Stranger, should you chance to be
At the C. U. L. T. C.
You'll observe a famous pair
On the courts performing there.
If you're able, tell me do:
Who is Wei, and which is Wu?

Note the weird fantastic screw
Served by Wei—or is it Wu?
Note the orthodox reply
Made by Wu—or is it Wei?
Surely each should get his Blue;
If not Wei, then why not Wu?

Side by side in beauty grew
Mr. Wei and Mr. Wu.
None could tell, though oft they'd try
Who was Wu and which was Wei.
Whose shall be the longed-for prize?
Wei's not Wu's—if Wu's not wise!

The following tale has been told many times as describing the ready wit of the average bookmaker, yet there are many who have failed to see the point of the joke. At Newmarket, a man who was by no means a racing expert but fancied a certain outsider went up to a bookie and said, "What price Fairy Footsteps?" The bookie replied, "100 to 8, sir." Said the novice pleadingly, "That's not much of a price. Can't you give something better?" After a moment's thought, the bookmaker replied, "Well, sir, seeing it's you, I'll make it ten to one." The best was booked and everyone appeared to be satisfied.

Apropos of the well-known story of the friends who were arguing about Camembert, one asserting that it was fish and the other that it was wine, comes the story of a polo match that was being played somewhere in India. One late-comer who did not know the colours bent over the enclosure barrier and said to a Tommy who was standing there, "Is that Jodhpur?" With a scornful look, the soldier addressed turned round and said, "No, it's polo."

One of the very best Rugby yarns that I have ever heard is that told by Sir Allan Arthur and printed originally in his amusing book "Hotch Potch and Kedgeree." It runs as follows: "I remember one of the International Football dinners, held at St. James' Hall—the occasion, I think, on which some of the English players amused themselves by sticking forks into the calves of some of the pipers (who had been engaged in honour of the Scotchmen), as they marched round the table, which led to the pipers striking work. The toast of the Rugby Football Union was drunk, coupled with the name of Mr. E. Kewley of Liverpool, who was the Hon. Secretary. Kewley got up to reply, and his first words were "On behalf of the Rugball Footby Union." He was, of course, stopped by tremendous cheering and when it subsided he got up again and began, "Gentlemen, on behalf of the Rugball Footby Union." He then received a tremendous ovation with shouts of "Good old Kewley," "Dear old Kewley," "Bravo, Kewley," and so on. He was by this time a little angry, but made another start, saying "Gentlemen, I do not know why you should shout so when I get on my feet, nor do I know why you should shout my name as you are not drinking my health but that of the Rugball Footby Union."

How long does it take you to pick up the joke of a story? There is a certain man of our acquaintance who is still puzzling over the following simple yarn:—

Infuriated gamekeeper: "Don't fish here."
Little boy, indifferently: "I don't know."

A story is often told of the younger days of "Plum" Warner, the famous cricketer, when he was studying law and reading in the chambers of a well-known barrister with another cricketer who also played for England. One day the latter turned round to Mr. Warner who was not particularly busy and asked him without a ghost of a smile if he would mind going to the library and finding out what was the punishment for a man who committed suicide. Mr. Warner assented and some ten minutes later returned in very peevish vein, having only just discovered the joke. What he said to his colleague is not recorded but it may well be imagined.

A good yarn is told of a certain international cricketer who shall be called Brown who was such an atrociously bad player at golf that his name was almost a bye-word on the courses which he frequented. One day when playing he had a new caddie who did not know him and Brown simply could not do anything right and after he had taken over 60 for the first six holes, he flung down his putter in disgust and turning to his caddie, he said bitterly, "Man alive, have you ever *heard* of a worse player than me?" The caddie pondered gravely for a moment and gave the disconcerting reply, "No, sir. Not unless it's that cricketer named Brown."

The fact that some golfers do not disdain to acquire an apparently ownerless ball is well illustrated in the sign which appears on a golf course somewhere in Scotland: "Members will refrain from picking up lost balls until they have stopped rolling." Caddies too have been known to suffer from the same failing, though the majority get them by honest search and incidentally make an addition to their income by re-selling them. A story is told of a caddie who was selling balls he had found and a rather poor player was pointed out to him as a probable purchaser. With a look of scorn he turned round and said, "I'll not sell him one of my balls. He'll play heaps better without one."

Professional footballers receive a great deal of hero-worship, particularly in the North of England and in this connection an excellent story is told. A famous goal-keeper is hailed in the street by a gentleman with a futurist muffler. "I don't remember you," said the great man. "Tha doesn't remember me? Why, tha knows when yo played th' cup-tie at

Sheffield?" "Oh, certainly." "Well, in th' last minute o' th' match tha tipped a shot o'er th' bar. Everybody shouted 'E-e-e-e !!!" "Yes, I remember that perfectly." "Aw thowt tha would," said the sport triumphantly. "Aw wur th'chap who threw th' ba' back."

Fisherman and golfers are noted for their tall stories and in a club one day, a member of each sporting fraternity sat telling impossible stories one against the other. The fisherman was getting worsted and he admitted that the golfer could easily beat him in telling lies. The golfer protested and said that he had had a dream which proved that the fisherman was the bigger liar. On being pressed for the dream, he said, "I dreamed that we were both dead and that we stood at the bottom of the ladder leading to Heaven. An angel gave us each a piece of chalk and said that we must make a mark on each rung for a lie we had told and off we started. It was a long business but after a time I had worked off all my lies and I arrived in Heaven." At this point the golfer stopped and everyone had blank faces, while the fisherman said, "Well, I think that is a rotten story. Besides, you never said what happened to me." The golfer grinned and said, "Well, I don't know quite what happened to you. You had to go back for more chalk."

A very good caddie story concerns the boy who was accompanying a golfer who could do nothing but tear up chunks of turf. Desperately he tried but 'twas of no avail and when on one green he tore up a square foot of really good turf, he exclaimed, "I've done it again. Whatever shall I do?" Without a moment's hesitation the caddie replied, "I think you'd better take that chunk of turf home with you, sir, and make a small course for yourself."

Caddies, like other mankind, are fond of an occasional drink and sometimes they overdo it like other mortals. The story is told of a well-known caddy in Scotland, whom a minister tried to reform. Meeting him one day, the minister said, "Davie, I was very glad to see you at the prayer meeting last night." The illuminating reply came from Davie, "Oh, that's whaur I got tae, was it?"

The late Countess of Carlisle was extremely fond of cricket and took infinite pains to improve the standard of play on her estate. She prepared a beautiful ground to which good touring sides were invited to play against her local side. She had one peculiarity in respect to this ground that she would allow no boundaries and everything must be run out. She was firmly insistent that if a man wished to score four or six runs from any stroke he must run for them and not stand idly at the wicket while the ball was retrieved. Her daughters were not so keen on the game and it is related of one of them that on being asked to watch a match she asked if it was Rugby or Association.

This brings to mind a story which illustrates how one person's love for a game may be spoilt by another person's indifference, an experience that we have all suffered at one time or another. It concerns a cricket enthusiast who took his little daughter to the Oval to see her first (and last) game of cricket. The following conversation took place :—

"You see that place in the centre. That's called the pitch."

"Daddy, can I have some ice cream?"

"All that beautiful lawn is called the outfield."

"Why can't we sit in those other seats?"

"That bell means that the game is going to start."

"Daddy, I want some toffee."

"Those men in white coats are called umpires."

"What has that funny man got in his basket?"

"Watch that man with the bat. He's trying to hit the ball."

"What are all those numbers for on that box?"

"Look, that's Jack Hobbs batting now."

"Daddy, that man bought some nuts. Why don't you buy some?"

"Did you see that hit? Right into the pavilion."

"Daddy, why don't you buy some nuts?"

"See that man catch the ball? That's Hobbs out."

"It says 'Sweets and Nuts' on that man's basket, daddy."

"Come along. We'll go home."

Exeunt irate parent and bewildered child from the Oval.

W. W. Wakefield, the Cambridge University forward and English International, used to tell a very good story of how a team with which he was touring, was captained out of a game. It went something like this:—

Once when we were touring in the West Country we kicked off against a strong wind. The ball was very light and pointed and the local side again and again made ground galore with long kicks down wind. However, at half time we were leading, so when they kicked off we renewed with stout hearts. But oh, the ball they kicked off with; round, heavy and tubby, and whenever it was kicked it didn't seem to make much difference whether it was against or with the wind. The result was that they beat us. After the game it struck our captain to ask why the balls were changed. Their captain, a hoary old veteran, with a wink and a nudge, said, "I haven't been playing football for 25 years without learning a thing or two!"

About fifteen years ago Wales played the all-conquering New Zealand team and succeeded amid great enthusiasm in beating them by a single try, being the only team to defeat them during the tour. It is stated that after the match the following incident took place on the playing pitch between two miners :—

"It was here, mon, I tell you."

"Are you sure it was here, Evan?"

"Inteet, mon, with mine own eyes I saw him put the ball there."

"Inteet to goodness it must be so then."

And he took a spade from under his coat and proceeded to cut away a sod which he carefully wrapped up and bore away in triumph to his native village in the mountains, there to show his admiring friends the piece of turf on which the try was scored for Wales when the New Zealanders were beaten.

In Army and village cricket there is generally a great reluctance among the more humble performers to wear two pads, one being considered quite sufficient. With reference to the one-pad cult, a well-known country circketer tells the following story for the truth of which he vouches. In a match between two villages, a supporter of the home team was reluctantly dragged out to bat, the side being one short. He protested his lack of knowledge of the art of batting but he eventually donned one pad and proceeded to the wicket. When he reached the wicket and was taking guard, the unpire pointed out to him that he had got the pad on the wrong leg whereupon he turned round and withered the umpire with a glance and the remark, "Ay, I know it well but I thought as 'ow I were goin' ter bat t'other end."

The scoring at baseball is by no means easy to understand for an Englishman and a yarn is told of one who went to a baseball game for the first time. Both sides made one run each during the first innings but afterwards failed to score and the Englishman watched the scoreboard intently as each team failed to make a run innings after innings. The game lasted sixteen innings and the figure one and the zeros following left their impression on the mind of the Englishman and when after the game a small boy in the street stopped him and asked him what the score was, he replied, "Oh, I lost all track of the game but the score's away up in the millions."

Two men in a London Tube were discussing Charles Dickens and one of them remarked, "Well you know, John puts Bleak House first and Martin Chuzzlewit second." At that point a husky voice from the seat behind said "Excuse me, gentlemen. I don't know your pal John but he's swindling yer. There ain't no such horses running."

The craze for autograph hunting which has been revived this year by the tour of the Australian team in England, recalls the experience of W. G. Grace who during his long career must have given his signature to thousands of admirers. A little girl who had been favoured with Grace's autograph approached him again a week or two later. "I gave it to you only quite recently," Grace remarked. "Yes," was the reply, "but I changed that one for two bishops."

A tale used to be told of Lewis Carrol, I think, who based his claim to be an expert at cricket upon the fact that he had once played in a real match and had been asked to bowl when at Oxford. We are not aware if he bowled more than one ball, but it must have been a strange delivery, for when the author of "Alice in Wonderland" turned round to the well-known umpire, George, and said, "What do you think of that, George?" the latter celebrity replied drily, "If the ball had gone far enough, it would have been a wide, sir."

Apropos of a certain Eton match in which champagne flowed a little too freely at lunch, with the result that a certain fielder fetching a ball from the trees was unable to throw it up on account of the impenetrable forest, Lord Harris tells a good story of an incident in county cricket. A certain amateur was asked to appear before the committee and explain why it was that in the previous match he had insisted on fielding on all fours. The only explanation he vouchsafed was that he could field better on all fours than the rest of the team could standing up.

This brings to mind the old chestnut about the man who had lunched only too well and had to go in last to make two runs to win the match. The Captain took him aside and explained the responsibility which rested upon him. At first he refused to bat at all because he could see three balls but eventually he proceeded to the wicket well primed with the information that he must make sure and hit the middle ball. Breathlessly the batting team watched him take guard but, alas! with the first ball he received his middle stump went flying and the match was lost. When he returned to the pavilion the Captain demanded angrily why he had not followed the behest to hit the middle ball, and angrily he replied that he had hit the middle ball. "Then," said the captain, "Why did you get out?" and the offender replied, " 'Cos I hit it with the wrong bat!"

"Plum" Warner in his new book "My Cricketing Life" tells hosts of good yarns. Here are two of the best. The first concerns a very fast left-hand bowler who was playing in a country house match and was making the ball bump in most disconcerting fashion and he was eventually responsible for the unique feat of dismissing four batsmen with one ball. No. 8 and No. 9 were batting and the former received a ball on the hand with such force that the blood poured out and he had to retire. No. 9 fainted at the sight of so much blood and had to follow suit. No 10 flatly refused to go and face the "wild-cat" bowler and thus No. 11 was left without a partner. Mr. Warner vouches for the truth of this story.

The Second story concerns one of the early visits of the West Indian team to England. They were playing against Gloucestershire and during one over G. L. Jessop proceeded to beat every ball to the boundary. The black members of the team were so amused at the discomfiture of the bowler that they promptly sat down on the ground and shrieked with laughter.

All referees in recognised Leagues in Association football at Home have to undergo an examination in order to prove their fitness for the responsibility. One such aspirant was appearing before the examiners and had succeeded in answering all their questions, newspaper on his knee, as if he were reading it. Another, who knew he could not read, told him the newspaper was wrong side up. The reply was, "Ony fool can read the paper the richt way, but it takes a good man to read it upside doon."

At a local meeting in India some years ago, only three horses were entered for a certain race and the riders were two European planters and an Indian boy. For monetary reasons both planters had determined not to win the race and the Indian jockey had received strict instructions from the owner that he must not win. When half the course had been covered, they were all hanging back with one accord and riding neck and neck. The planters seeing the state of affairs, hung back and commenced to belabour the Indian's horse, so the unfortunate rider knowing what was his fate if he won, promptly fell off his mount and left the planters to continue. One of them, seeing a gap in the hedge, swerved violently off the track and made across country as if out of control. The other could not use either of the same ruses and had no alternative but to finish but being a man of resource he managed to shake loose five pounds of his weights so that with the race declared void the cleverness of all three riders was wasted.

though one or two had rather puzzled him. The man who had been questioning him said at last: "Quite good, Mr. Smith. Now one final question. Supposing a corner kick was taken and the ball dropped on the cross bar of the goal and after bouncing once or twice, remained there. What would you call that?" Mr. Smith was badly puzzled and he could think of no rule which would cover such a case and at last he blurted out: "I should call it a blooming miracle." He got through.

Andra Kirkaldy tells some excellent stories in his book "Fifty Years of Golf," One of the best concerns Ben Sayers and his devoted caddie Big Crawford. Ben Sayers and other professionals were once playing at Alexandra Park, Glasgow. One of the holes ran alongside a field where a ploughman was "woa-in' " and "woa-beckin' " to a pair of horses.

"Stop yer plooin' !" shouted Ben's caddie.

"Not damned likely," replied the ploughman. "Plooin' cam' before hockey."

"This is no' hockey, it's golf," said Sayers.

"Ca' it what ye like," was the reply, "plooin's mair important."

The ploughman went on with his work and Sayers missed the putt.

With reference to the old time caddies, Kirkaldy remarks that many of them had no education whatever. One of them was sitting in the caddies' shelter on a stormy day with a